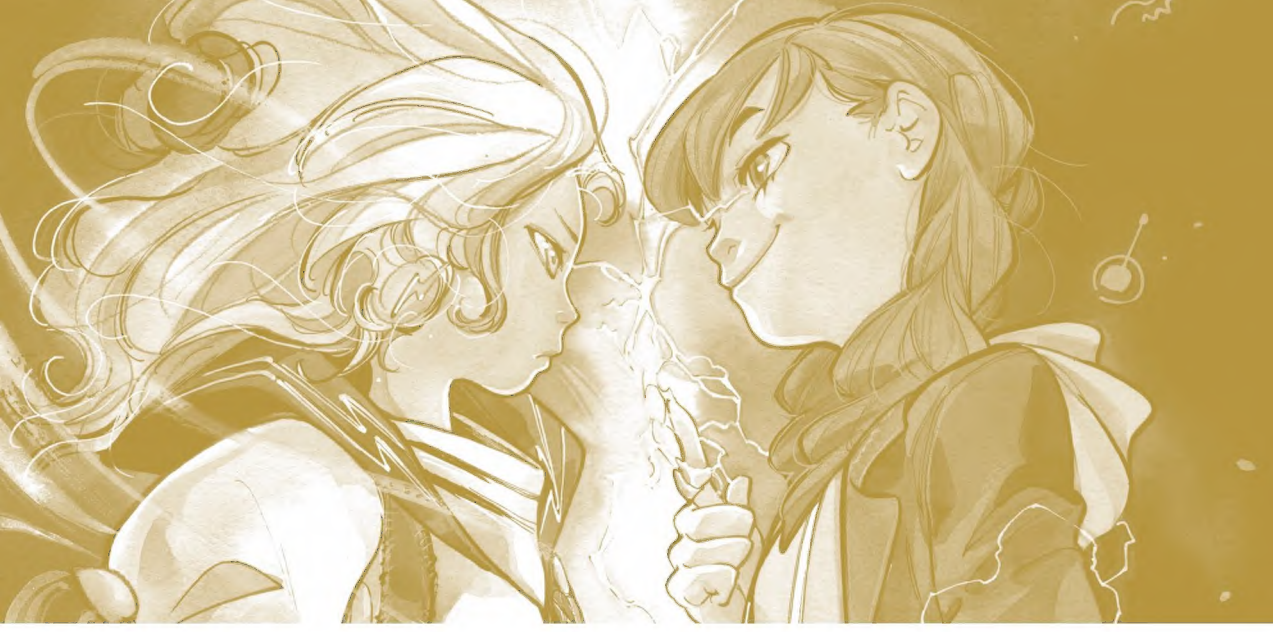
MARVEL

ULTIMATE X-MEN

CHILDREN OF THE ATOM

PEACH MOMOKO

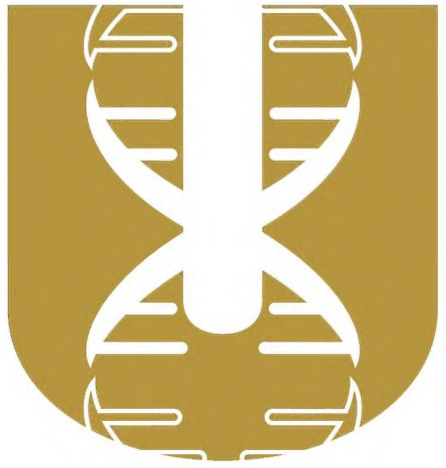


A diabolical genius known as **THE MAKER** used time travel to create his ideal Earth by systematically preventing anyone from ever becoming a super hero—except for those on his secret **MAKER'S COUNCIL**, whom he stationed to rule over different regions of the world. Overseeing the Eastern territory of **HI NO KUNI ("LAND OF THE SUN")** is **SUNFIRE** and his right hand, **VIPER.**

In Hi No Kuni, a teenage girl named **HISAKO ICHIKI (ARMOR)** had new powers awaken to protect her when a sinister **SHADOW** attacked. As Hisako and her friends **MEI IGARASHI (MAYSTORM)** and **NICO MINORU** pursued the source behind the Shadow, they learned of a strange cult called **THE CHILDREN OF THE ATOM** that worships ***HOMO SUPERIOR.***

Surprisingly, it turns out that Nico's friends **NATSU** and **MORI** are members of the cult...and they recognized the Shadow as their fellow cult member **SHINOBU KAGEYAMA.**

© 2025 MARVEL. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental.



CHILDREN OF THE ATOM

WRITER & ARTIST: **PEACH MOMOKO**
SCRIPT ADAPTATION: **ZACK DAVISSON**

LETTERER: **VC's TRAVIS LANHAM**
COVER ART: **PEACH MOMOKO**

ASSISTANT EDITOR: **MICHELLE MARCHESE**
EDITOR: **WIL MOSS**

COLLECTION EDITOR **JENNIFER GRÜNWALD**
ASSISTANT EDITOR **DANIEL KIRCHHOFFER**
TALENT RELATIONS SPECIALIST **LISA MONTALBANO**
VP, PRODUCTION & SPECIAL PROJECTS **JEFF YOUNGQUIST**
BOOK DESIGNER **STACIE ZUCKER**
MANAGER & SENIOR DESIGNER **ADAM DEL RE**
LEAD DESIGNER **JAY BOWEN**
VP, PRINT & DIGITAL PUBLISHING **DAVID GABRIEL**
SR. MANAGER, DIGITAL **TIM SMITH 3**
DIGITAL PRODUCTION **RACHEL YOUNG**
EDITOR IN CHIEF **C.B. CEBULSKI**

X-MEN CREATED BY **STAN LEE** & **JACK KIRBY**

ULTIMATE X-MEN

CAST:

HISAKO ICHIKI
ARMOR

MEI IGARASHI
MAYSTORM

NICO MINORU
FLEDGLING PSYCHIC

MORI
NICO'S FRIEND

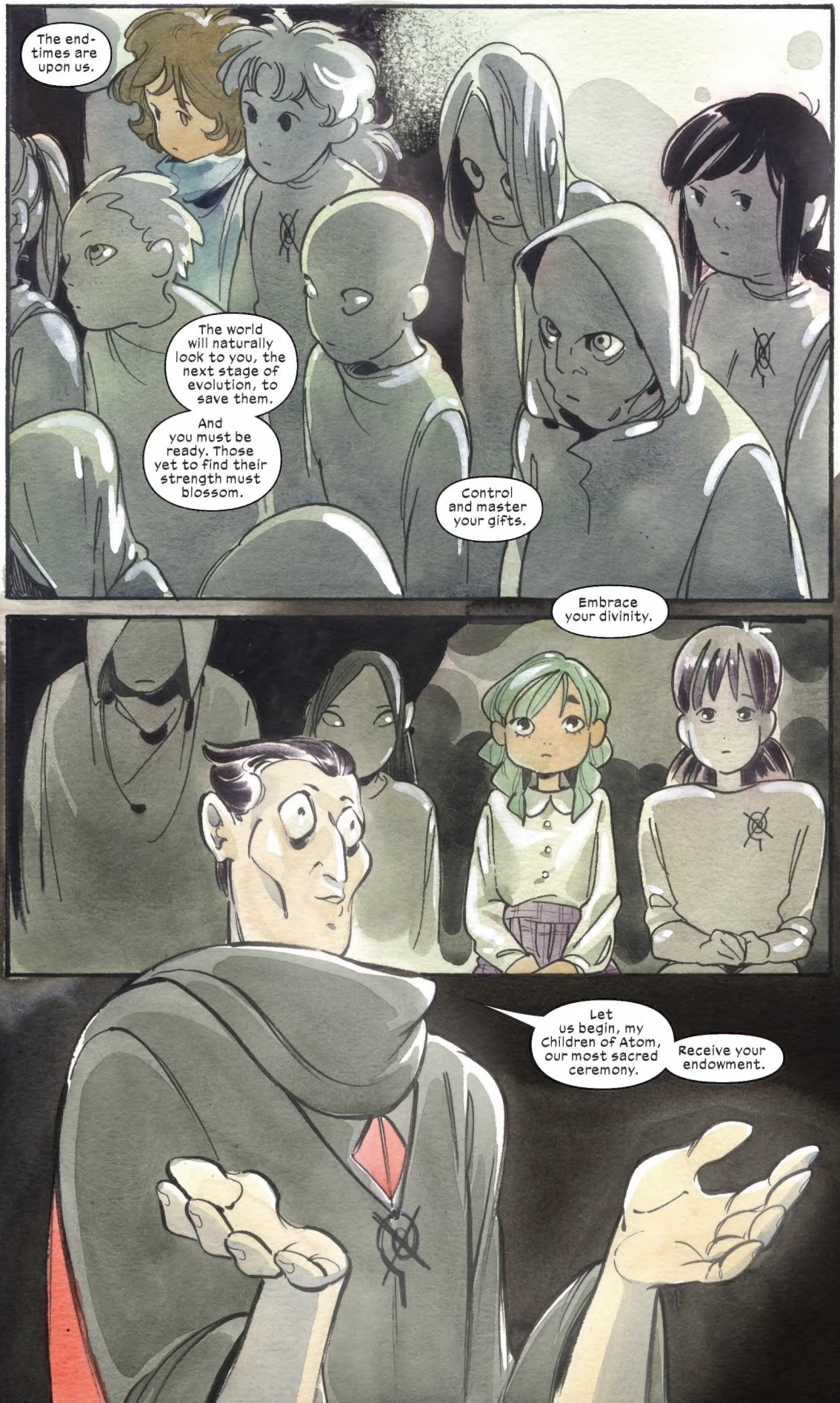
NATSU TSUKISHIMA
NICO'S FRIEND

NORIKO ASHIDA
SURGE

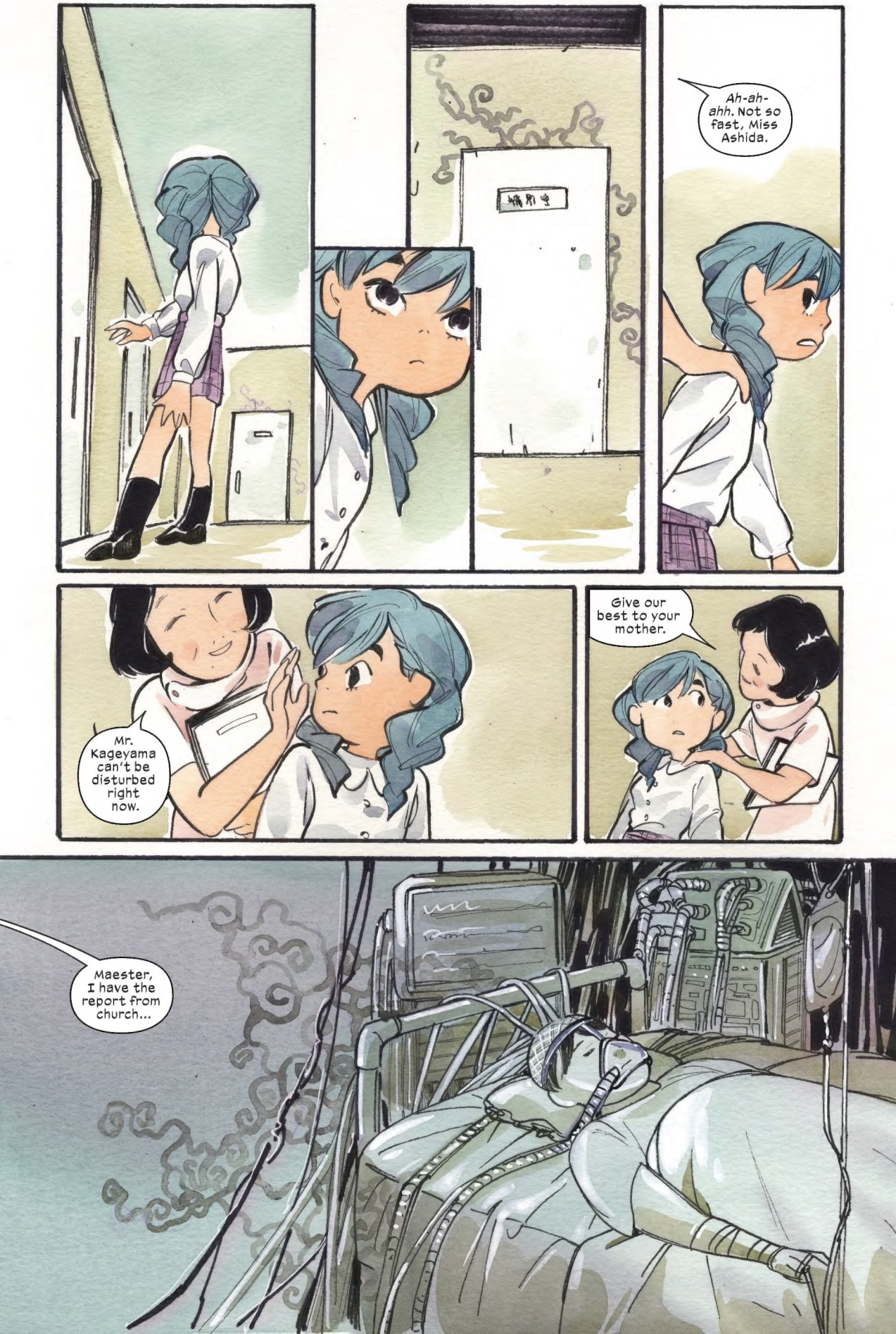
SHINOBU KAGEYAMA
SHADOW KING

ULTIMATE
X-MEN
7
鬼
悪

TEMPLE OF THE REVEALED X.
CHILDREN OF THE ATOM.
Homo superior!!!
In the name of the Testament of X...
...I, your Maester, have devoted my life to you as your humble servant. Ensuring your joy and equality, my Children of the Atom.
But like all children, you have outgrown your parent. The time has come to reveal your genetic superiority and revel in your powers.
To become truly free!!!


The end-times are upon us.
The world will naturally look to you, the next stage of evolution, to save them.
And you must be ready. Those yet to find their strength must blossom.
Control and master your gifts.
Embrace your divinity.
Let us begin, my Children of Atom, our most sacred ceremony.
Receive your endowment.

スマホ禁止!!
Use of Phones Prohibited
Miss Ashida. Please come in.
How are we feeling these days? Everything good?
Yep.
Have we been using our gifts?
Sometimes...
And are we experiencing any side effects?
Nothing special, I guess...
If anything changes, tell your mother right away. We can't be too careful.
Oh, and by the way...
I'll be taking that phone, please. You're well aware they are prohibited in this area.

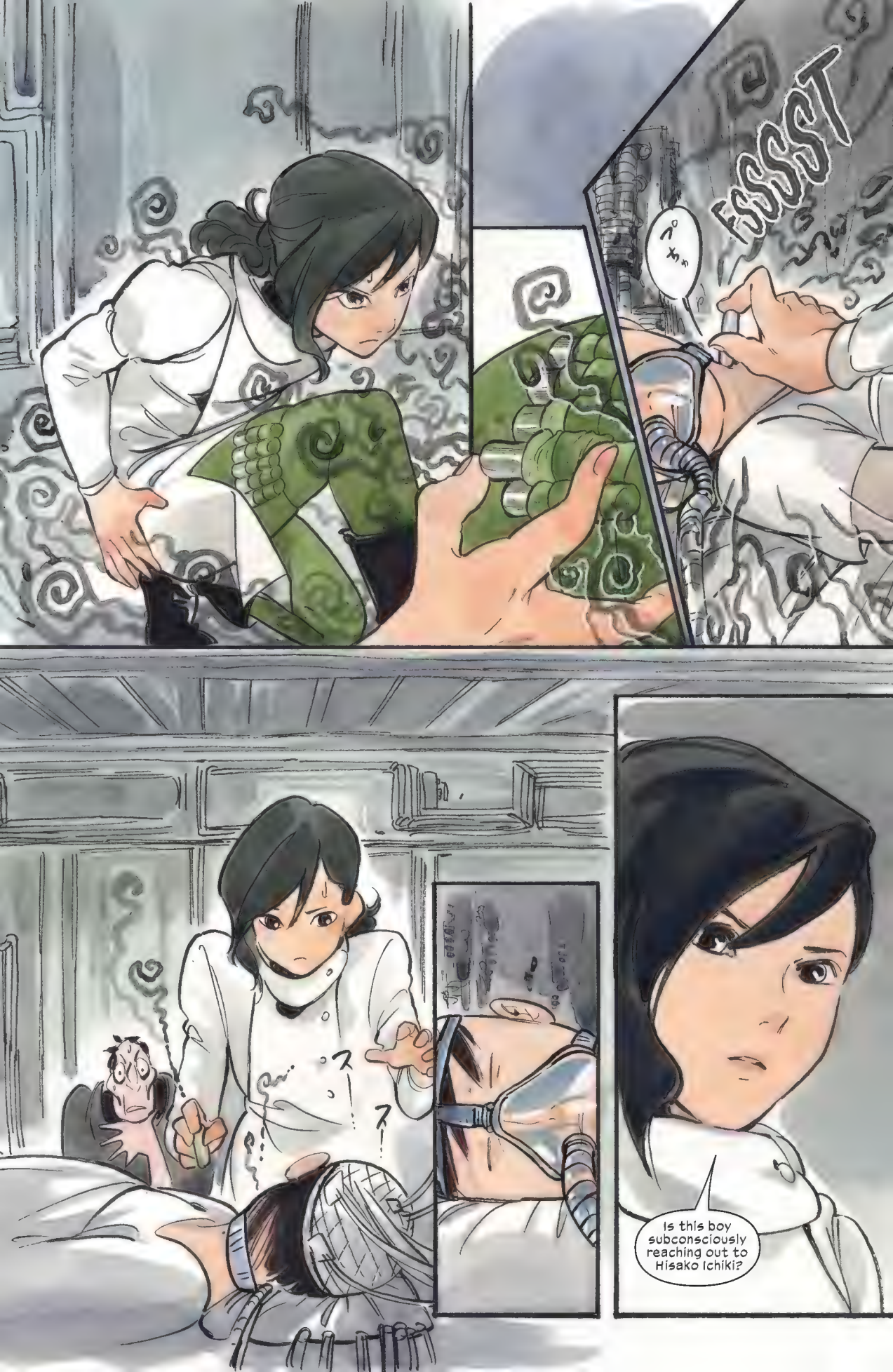

Ah-ah-ahh. Not so fast, Miss Ashida.
Mr. Kageyama can't be disturbed right now.
Give our best to your mother.
Maester, I have the report from church...

How blessed.
My dear children follow the righteous path to godhood.
Guide them like a shepherd and ensure none lose their way. After all...
...their blood is our most sacred relic.
"Especially the miraculous Mr. Kageyama here. His gift-- his X-Gene-- is beyond imagination. Not only his telepathy...
"...but his ability to activate latent powers in others. To awaken them to their potential.
"A superior among superiors."

More blessed children arise each day.
Yet their gifts appear only in moments of crisis, when they are irresolute.
We must bolster the faithful. We need more like our Mr. Kageyama.
Perhaps these *new children* need to be guided to their *full potential.*
You mean this group of kids?
Hisako Ichiki, Mei Igarashi, Nico Minoru...
Indeed, Sister Sada. Lost sheep to be brought into our flock.
True *Homo superior.*
KNOCK KNOCK

Sister Sada, you may leave now.
Tsk.
There's been another death.
How many does that make this year?
These experiments are too important for sloppy work. You need to get this under control.
I understand, Viper. I'll take care of it.
You won't like it if I am forced to take matters into my own hands.
Emperor Sunfire would not be pleased if this went public.
I burn every failure myself.
Besides, if you are so worried about leaks, it would be smart not to talk like this in front of others.
It's fine. I made sure he's sedated.

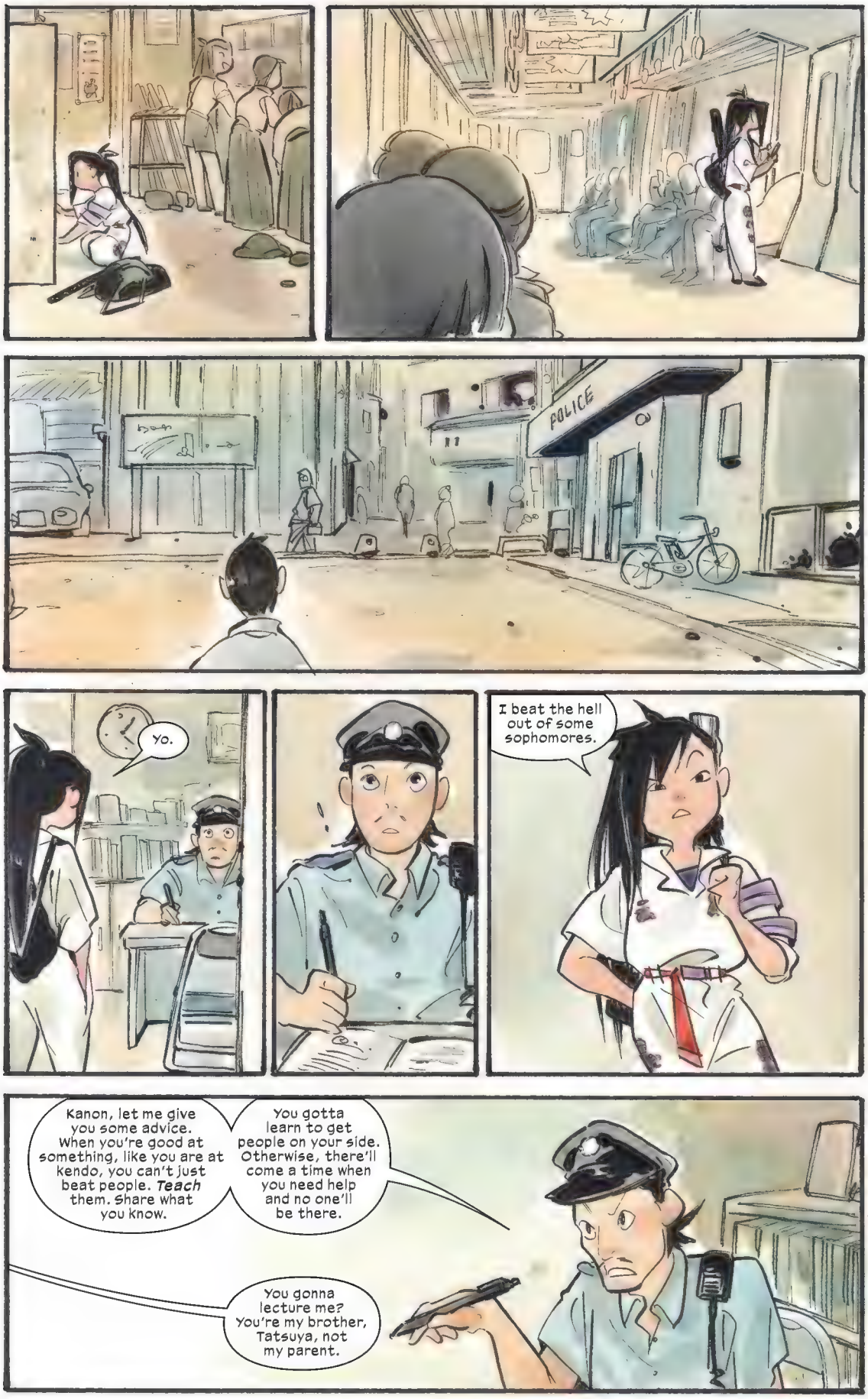
Hisako... My...Hisako...
Ahhhggh...
Urrkkkk.
V-Viper...please...do something...
Arullllkk...
Hi...sa... ko...


FSSSST
Is this boy subconsciously reaching out to Hisako Ichiki?

IRODORI HIGH SCHOOL.
NEW SEMESTER.
Are you going to tonight's Jugoya Matsuri?
The full-moon harvest festival? I don't know.
Come on, we can go together! It'll be fun!
Maybe...
I wonder if Nico got any answers from Natsu.
No clue. I kinda spaced on that.
Hey!

Hello? Excuse you?!
Soooo... Jugoya Matsuri? Whaddya say?
Oh, come on! After all the fights we've been in, you're not gonna say that hurt, are you?!
It's not that.
I feel like this red...power? Whatever it is, it's getting stronger.
?

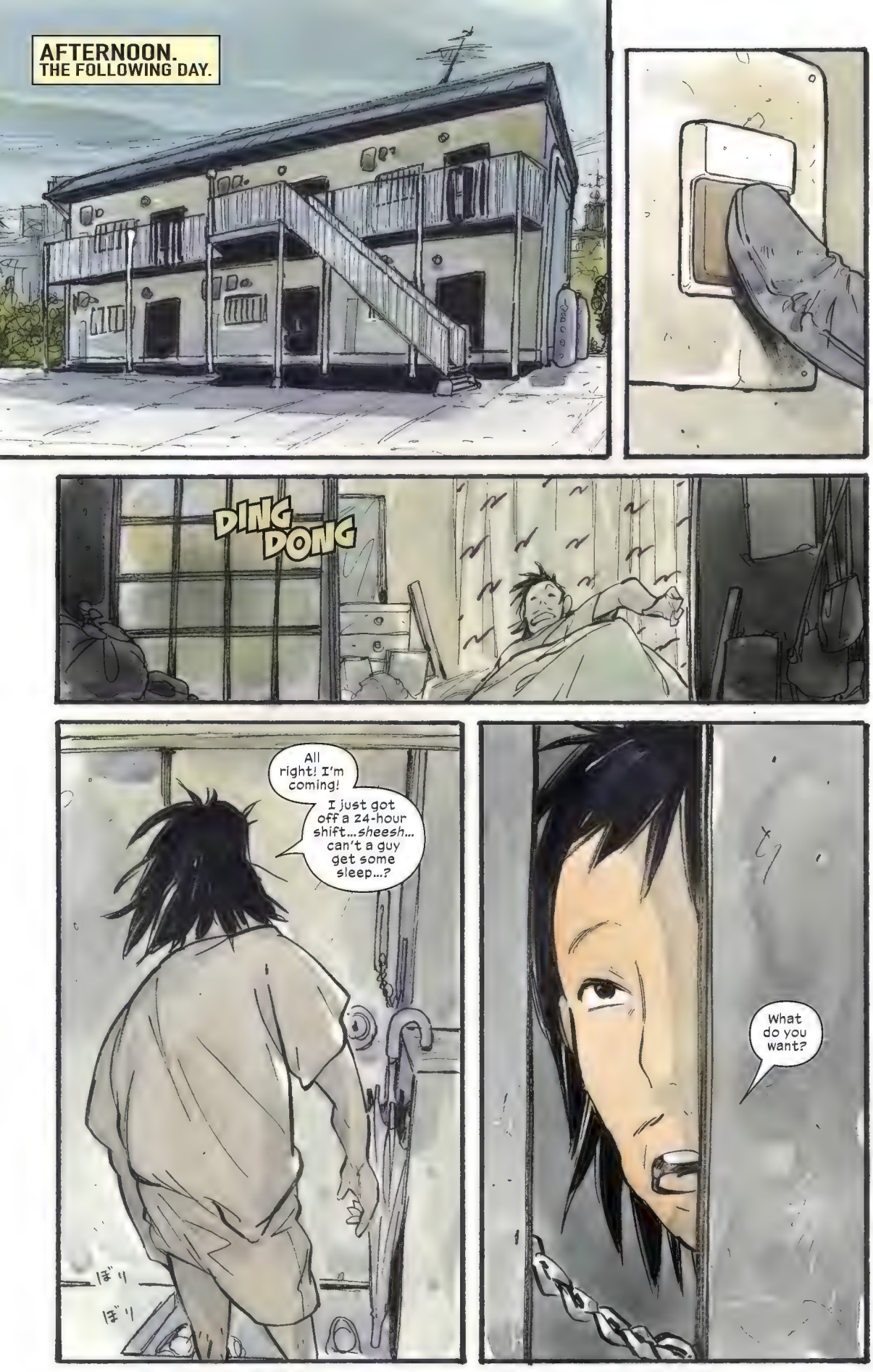
Enough, Kanon! Maitta! You win!


POLICE
Yo.
I beat the hell out of some sophomores.
Kanon, let me give you some advice. When you're good at something, like you are at kendo, you can't just beat people. *Teach* them. Share what you know.
You gotta learn to get people on your side. Otherwise, there'll come a time when you need help and no one'll be there.
You gonna lecture me? You're my brother, Tatsuya, not my parent.

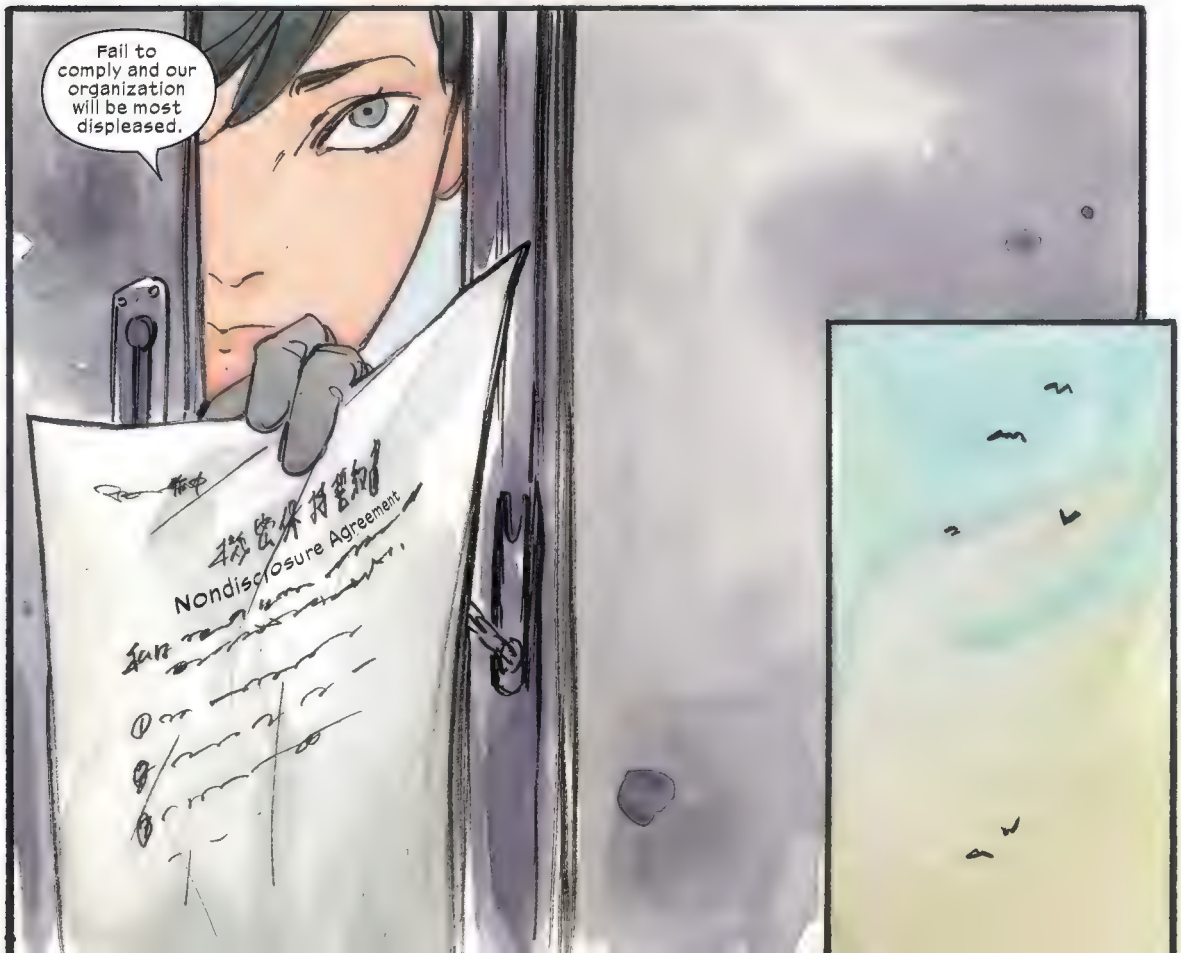
Go home, Kanon. I'm busy. I don't have time to babysit you.
Excuse me...
Yes, ma'am. How can I help?
I go fer walks on th' Arakawa River. Been doing it fer years.
Been seeing a beat-up suitcase on a riverbank fer the past few days...
♪Intriguing♪
If you let me know the specific location, I'll check on it personally.
We appreciate your diligence in keeping our city clean.
Will you go home already? It's getting dark.
Don't follow me!!!

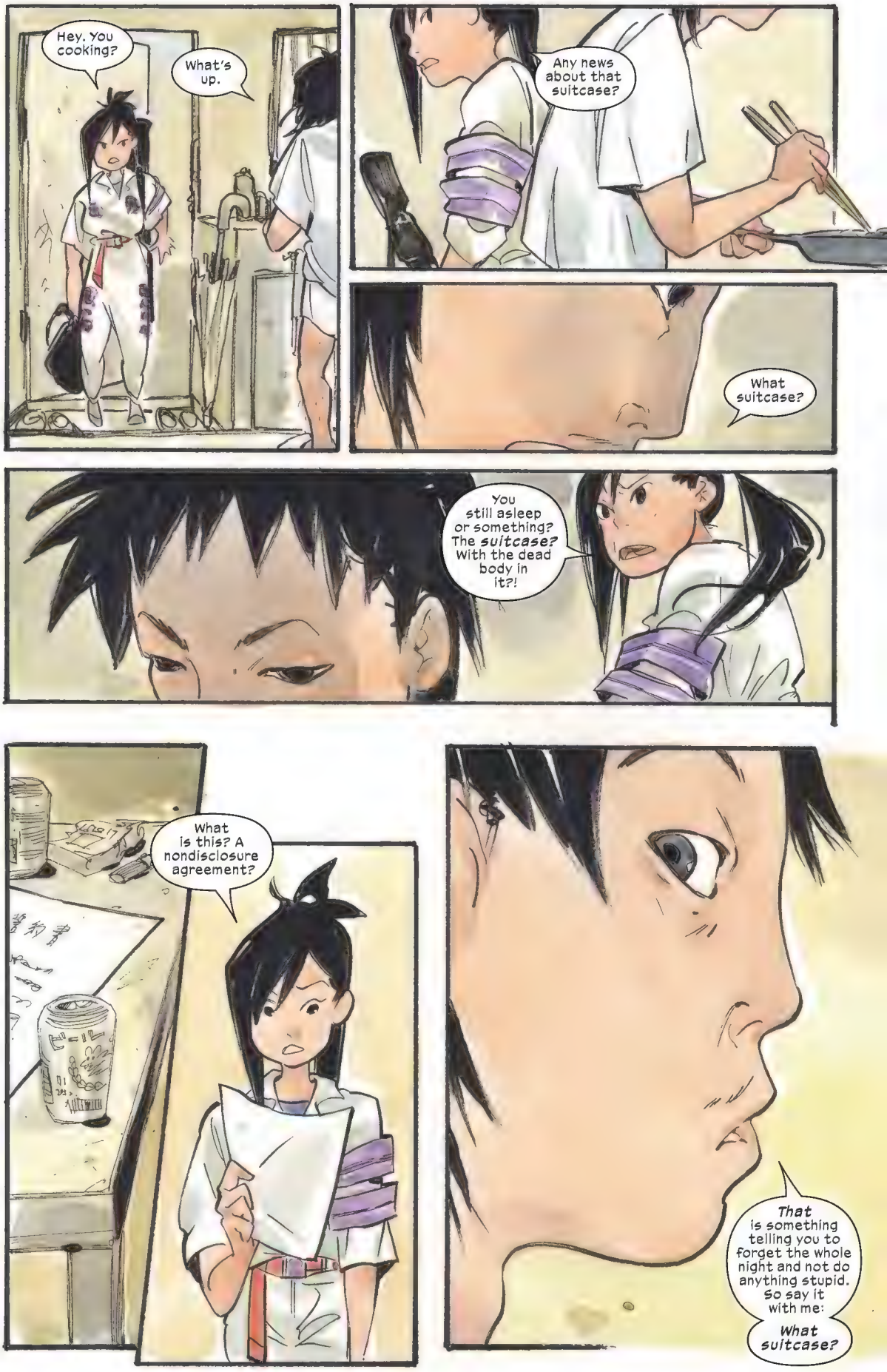
Sheesh, you got some stamina, sis. Since you're here, make yourself useful and help me find this suitcase.
Just don't...touch it if you find it.
Okay, we've been looking for like an hour. Is it even--?
Would you look at that.
Oh no...that smell--
Kanon!!! Don't open it!

No way...
Is that...a body?
Ullllrrrrrkkkk...
KLIK

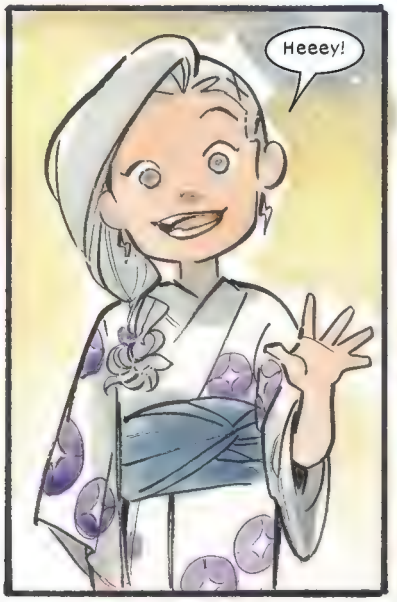

AFTERNOON.
THE FOLLOWING DAY.
DING DONG
All right! I'm coming!
I just got off a 24-hour shift...*sheesh*... can't a guy get some sleep...?
ぼり ぼり
What do you want?

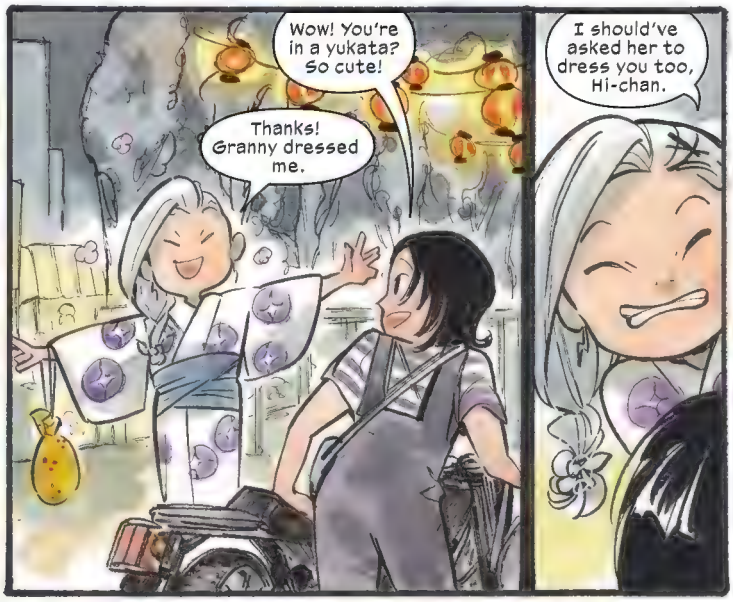
Tatsuya Sainouchi?
That's me...
Your superiors informed us you found something of ours. We've retrieved it. You will sign here.

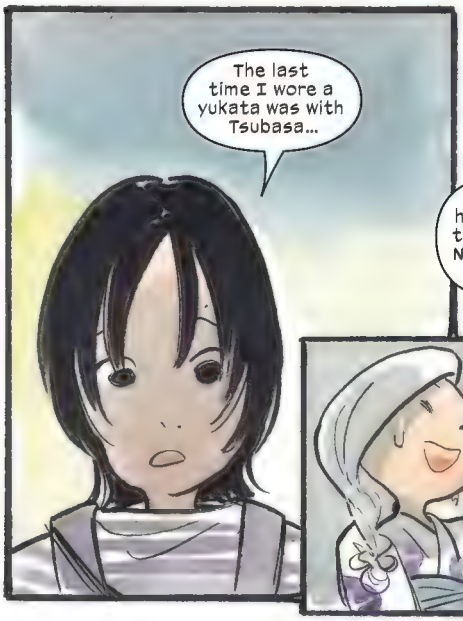

Fail to comply and our organization will be most displeased.
秘密保持契約
Nondisclosure Agreement


Hey. You cooking?
What's up.
Any news about that suitcase?
What suitcase?
You still asleep or something? The *suitcase?* With the dead body in it?!
What is this? A nondisclosure agreement?
That is something telling you to forget the whole night and not do anything stupid. So say it with me:
What suitcase?

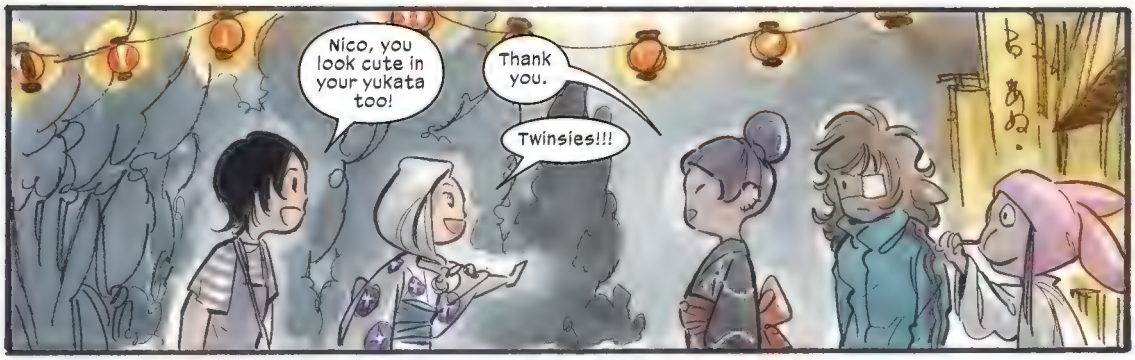
JUGOYA MATSURI.


Heeey!

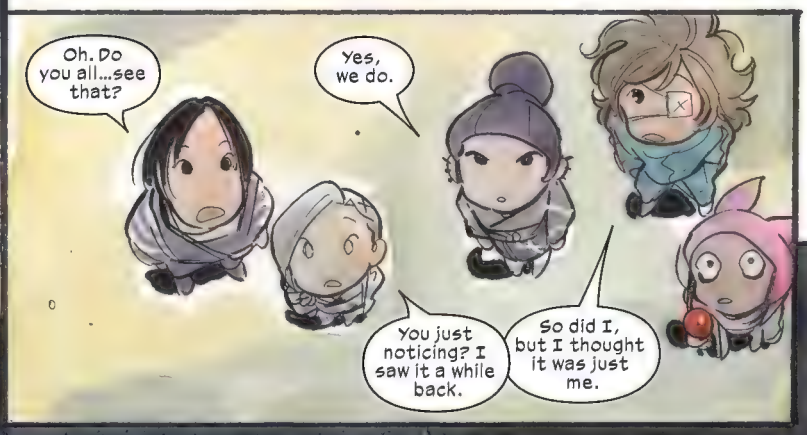

Wow! You're in a yukata? So cute!
Thanks! Granny dressed me.
I should've asked her to dress you too, Hi-chan.


The last time I wore a yukata was with Tsubasa...
Uh... hey...isn't that Nico, Natsu and Mori?

Heeee-y!!! Phew, dodged that bullet...
やきそば


Nico, you look cute in your yukata too!
Thank you.
Twinsies!!!

Nico, what are you looking at?


Oh. Do you all...see that?
Yes, we do.
You just noticing? I saw it a while back.
So did I, but I thought it was just me.

Is it... getting bigger?

LEXICON

TSUKIMI

"Moon Viewing"—festivals honoring the autumn moon.

Autumn is the season of the year when the moon is the most beautiful.

秋の風物詩、お月見　十五夜のお月見。

月を眺めてお団子を食べる秋の風物詩。

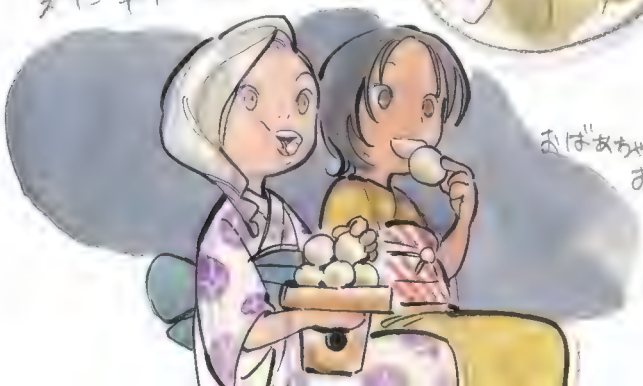
JUGOYA

A festival celebrated on the fifteenth night from the start of the autumn season. We eat dango (sweet rice flour dumplings) and stare at the moon.

お団子のお供え

月の中にうさぎが住んでいて、十五夜に月の中を覗き込むと、うさぎがお餅つきをしている様子が見れるっていうので一度だけ本気で見た事がある……。

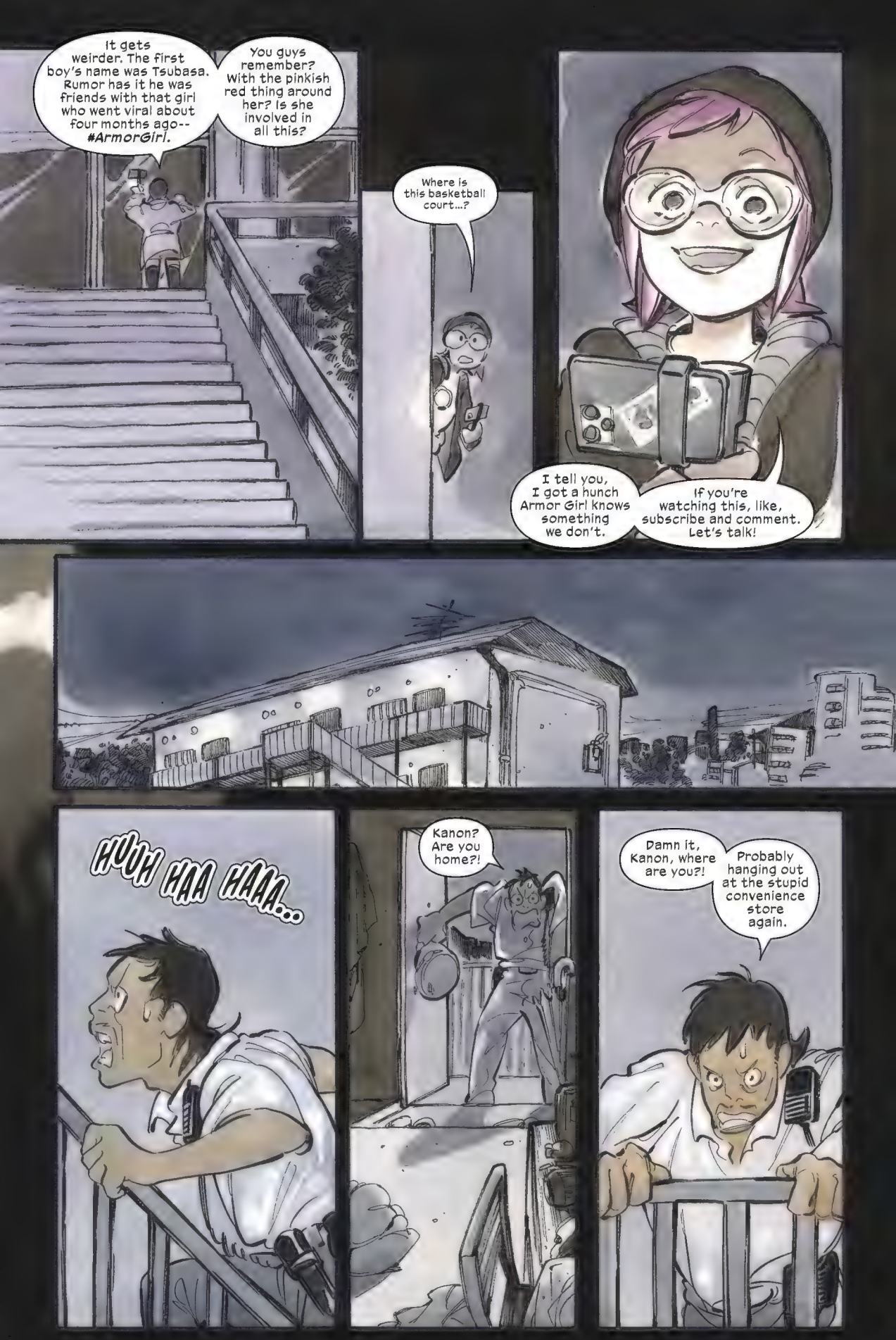
It is said that on the face of the full moon, you can see a rabbit making mochi.



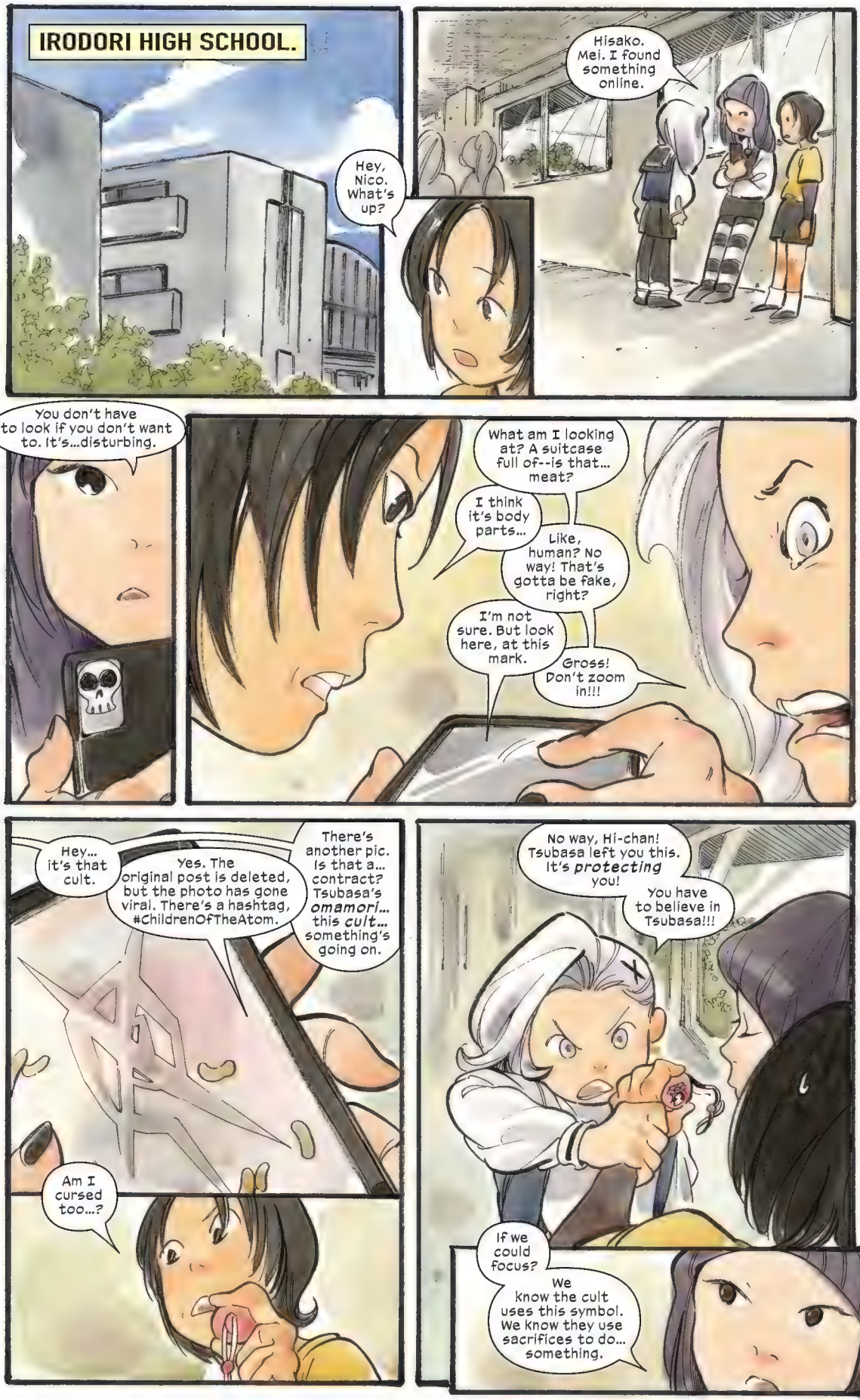
おばあちゃんの団子おいしいねー。

ULTIMATE
X-MEN
8

Hello, faithful 8-Chome fans! Your host and urban investigator *Chimame* here!!! Guess where I'm at tonight? That's right, the infamous Kirigaya Minami Middle School--or should I say *Murder School?*
Three former students dead by suicide, hanging in their old classroom. The fourth, their basketball coach, was found dead a few days earlier in his own house--also swinging. *Creeeeepy!*
But that's not the whole story.
8-CHOME CHANNEL
I hope no one calls the cops on me...
Come on, Yukio, you can do this... Here we go.
The real body count is *five.* That's right, there was another student. Also on the basketball team. Also killed himself.
This happened before the other students and coach died. And get this: The kid was apparently bullied by the same former students and coach who later killed themselves. Coincidence? I think not.
Five people...all connected... all died by suicide within a short period of time. What exactly is going on at Kirigaya Minami Murder School? Let's find out.


It gets weirder. The first boy's name was Tsubasa. Rumor has it he was friends with that girl who went viral about four months ago-- #ArmorGirl.
You guys remember? With the pinkish red thing around her? Is she involved in all this?
Where is this basketball court...?
I tell you, I got a hunch Armor Girl knows something we don't.
If you're watching this, like, subscribe and comment. Let's talk!
HUUH HAA HAAA...
Kanon? Are you home?!
Damn it, Kanon, where are you?!
Probably hanging out at the stupid convenience store again.

There you are!
Crap! It's the cops!
Eh, it's just my brother.
Later, Kanon!
See ya.
Why. Did. You. Post. It?
You mean the NDA? Or the pic of that horror-show suitcase?
What's the big deal, Tatsuya?
I deleted it right away.
We're the ones who are gonna get deleted!
Turn your phone off. We need to go.
Now.


IRODORI HIGH SCHOOL.
Hey, Nico. What's up?
Hisako. Mei. I found something online.
You don't have to look if you don't want to. It's...disturbing.
What am I looking at? A suitcase full of--is that... meat?
I think it's body parts...
Like, human? No way! That's gotta be fake, right?
I'm not sure. But look here, at this mark.
Gross! Don't zoom in!!!
Hey... it's that cult.
Yes. The original post is deleted, but the photo has gone viral. There's a hashtag, #ChildrenOfTheAtom.
There's another pic. Is that a... contract? Tsubasa's omamori... this cult... something's going on.
Am I cursed too...?
No way, Hi-chan! Tsubasa left you this. It's protecting you!
You have to believe in Tsubasa!!!
If we could focus?
We know the cult uses this symbol. We know they use sacrifices to do... something.

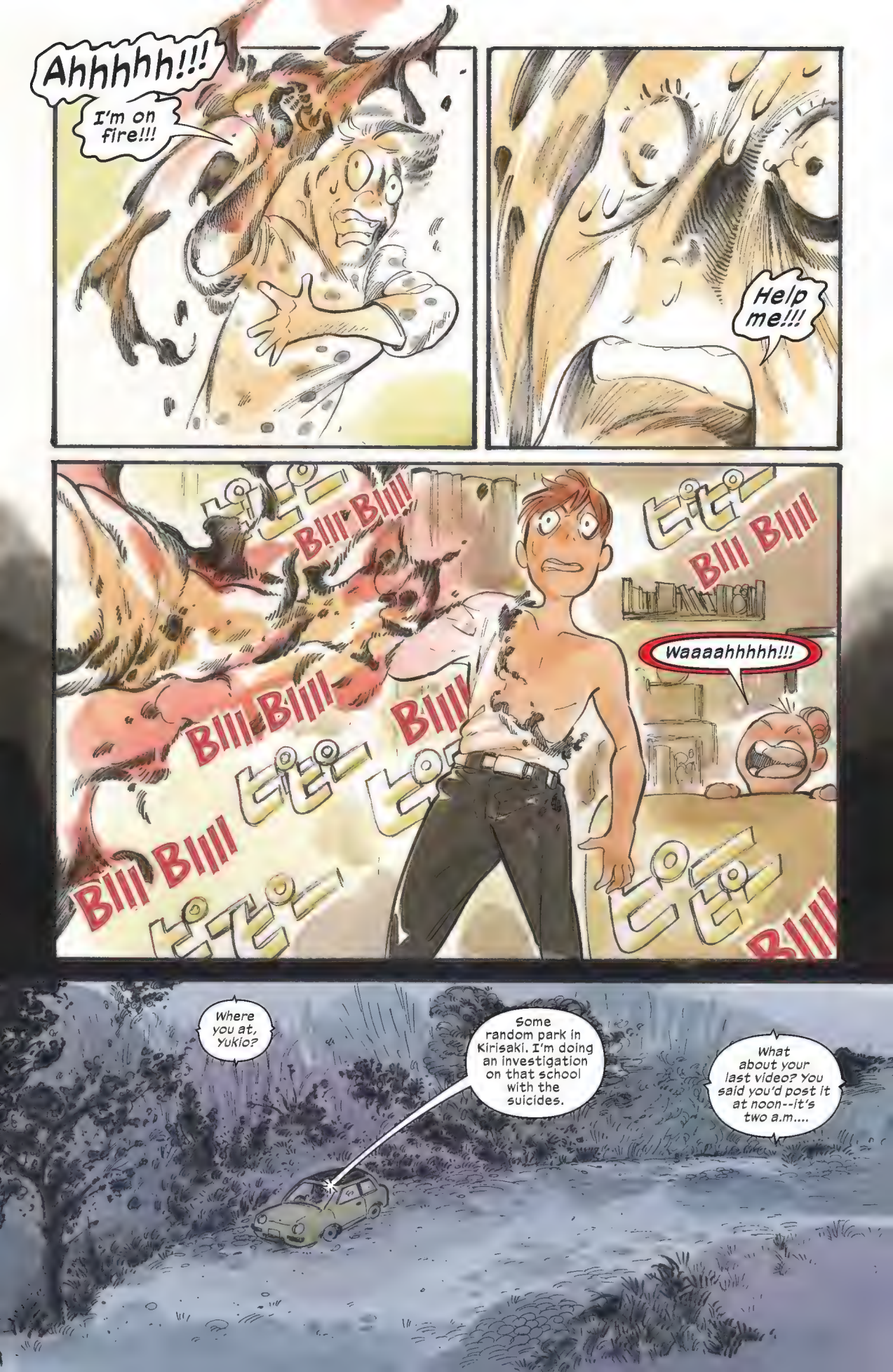
You think their followers know about these sacrifices?
Doubtful. This legal document suggests something different.
I guess...
With cults, followers are brainwashed to believe without thinking. They are taught not to question. They don't need to sign NDAs.
Although some are only members because of their families. Like Natsu.
And we know how she feels.
Someone like Mei, who's spirited and confident, wouldn't get caught up in this. But people who are empty and need something to believe in...
...that's who cults prey on.
Natsu...I remember seeing a number like this on her. I thought it was just a tattoo. We weren't close at the time, so I didn't think to ask.
But based on that...
127
"...I think we can be confident this picture is real."

Heeey, Nastu. That you, girl? It's been a while.
Cool eye patch.
You still hanging around that sad goth chick Nico?
Who are they?
Did that weird-ass religion of yours finally fix you?
Make you believe you have value?
Sorry, we're meeting some friends...
Don't you dare!

You think you can walk away from me?! You want to talk about friends?!
Be careful about being friends with Natsu.
Hey... let's just go...
She's a real killer.
What did she mean?
KRNK
See you.
Don't!

ZZZAAARKT
Wh-what was that...?
Stay away from her. She's a *freak* in a *messed-up cult.*
And a *murderer.*

Mom... are we in a cult?
#アトムの家
#カルト
#人体実験
#やばいもの見つけた
Whatever do you mean?
The Children of the Atom--they talk about how special we are. But then...
...they take our blood and experiment on us. Does that sound normal? Is it even safe? They treat us like specimens in a lab!
Look what people are saying!
That's just ignorant outsider talk. Listen to what Maester says. He guides us.
Social media is poisoning you.
Mom, something's going on. Open your eyes!
What are you two fighting about?
Mom, let go!!!

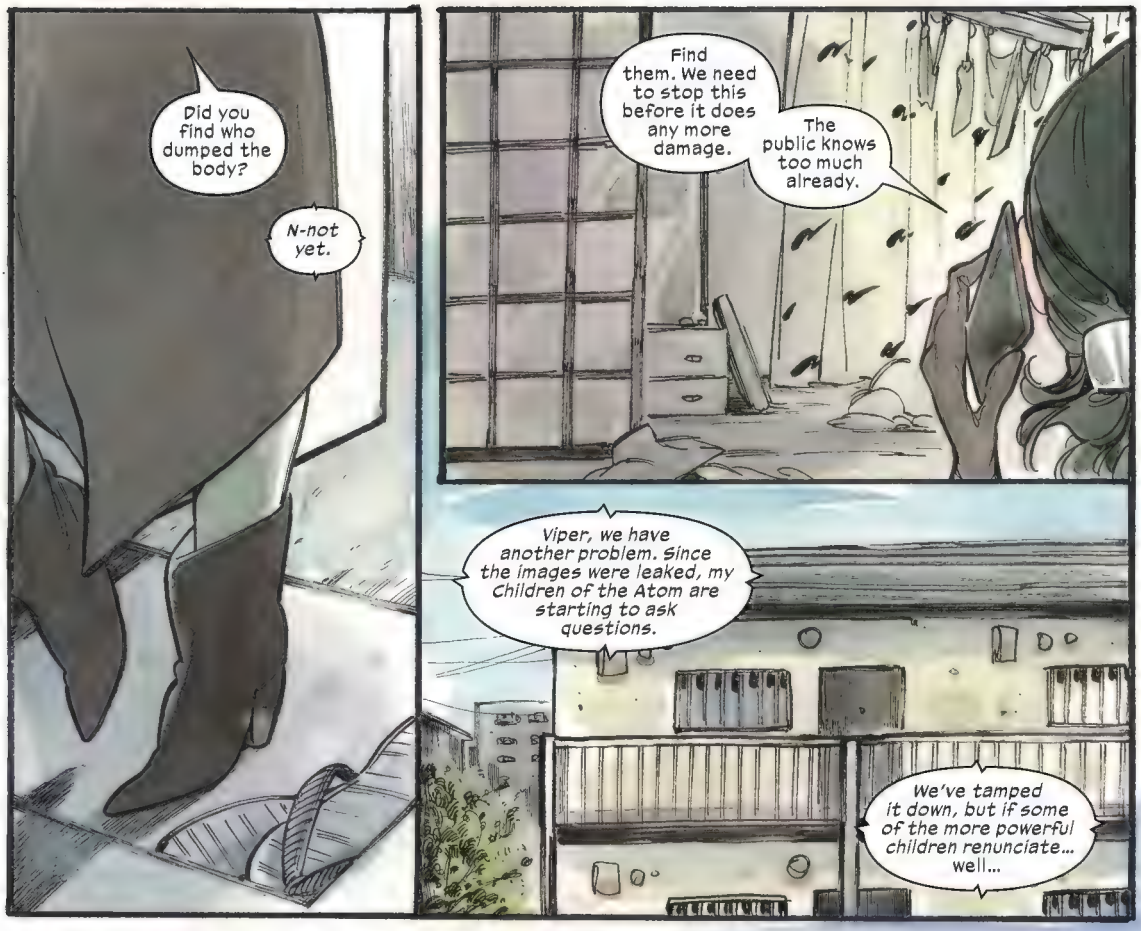

Ahhhhh!!!
I'm on fire!!!
Help me!!!
Waaaahhhhh!!!
Where you at, Yukio?
Some random park in Kirisaki. I'm doing an investigation on that school with the suicides.
What about your last video? You said you'd post it at noon--it's two a.m....

Sorry. Totes forgot to edit and upload. I'll do it tomorrow.
Don't tell me you're camping in your car again. You gotta be more careful...
Yeah, yeah. I'll be back by lunch. Talk to you then. Night!
Booooo! I was hoping if I came all the way out here, I'd catch a glimpse of that Armor Girl.
If I could be the first one to talk to her, my numbers would skyrocket.
No way.

Aahhh!!!
Protect? Protect what?!
A freaking cult?! What the hell?
No.
Damn.
WAY!

Umm... Miss...Armor Girl...?
ピコン!
S-sorry to bother you. I didn't expect to see you here--well, I was *hoping*, but...
...I'm...*uhh*... a streamer... Do you know Chimame from 8-chome Channel?

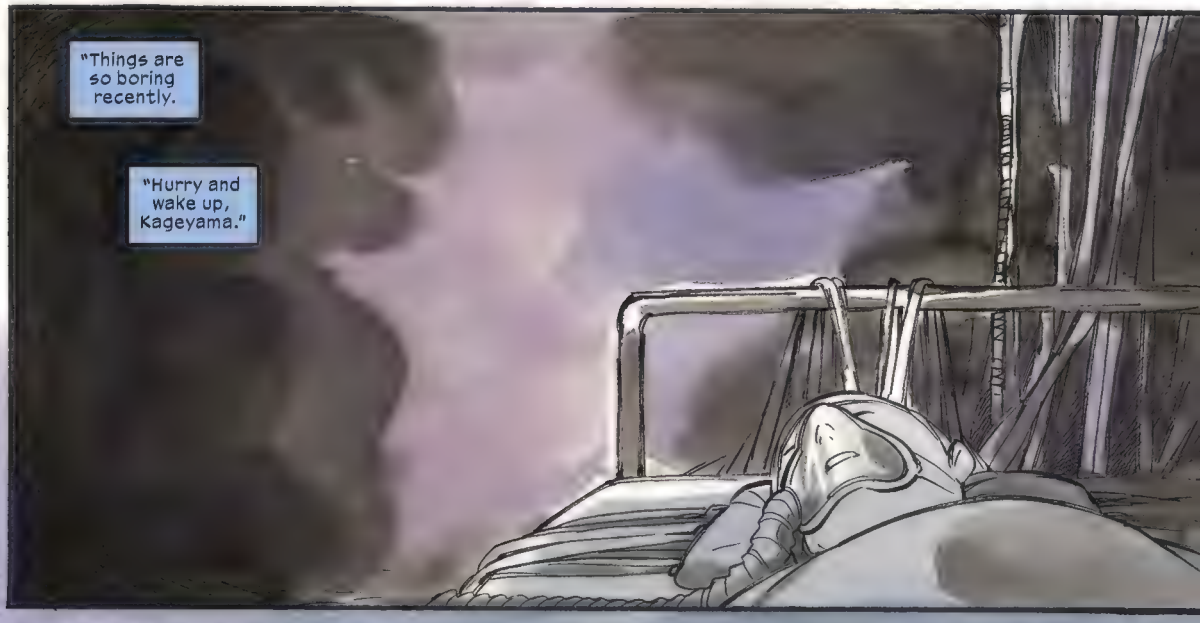
You are... Armor Girl, right?
Don't get me wrong. I'm totally on your side. I just wanted to ask you about your friend...
...Tsubasa?
If now's not a good time, we could trade numbers and--

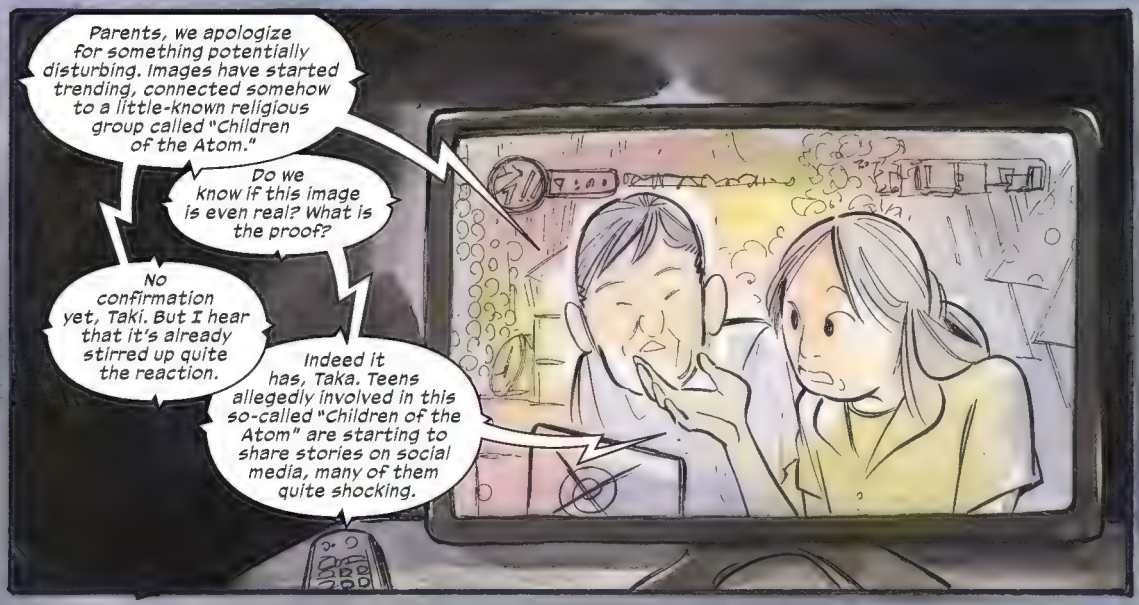

Did you find who dumped the body?
N-not yet.
Find them. We need to stop this before it does any more damage.
The public knows too much already.
Viper, we have another problem. Since the images were leaked, my Children of the Atom are starting to ask questions.
We've tamped it down, but if some of the more powerful children renunciate... well...

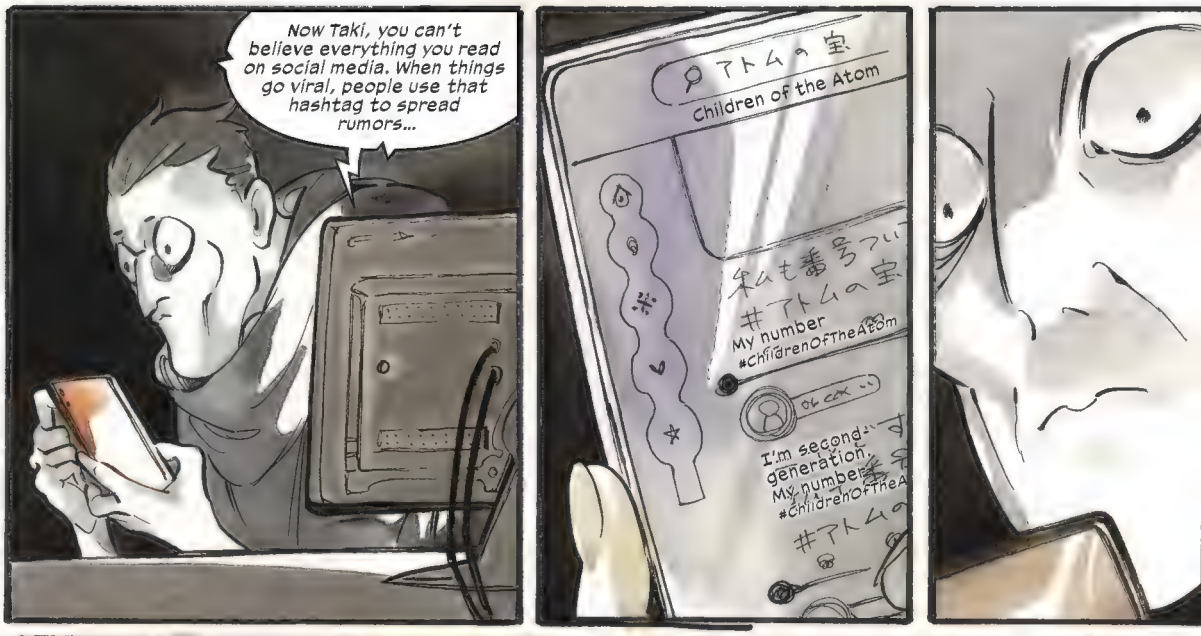
You are the Maester. Make them believe your words.
If you can't do that, you are of no use to us.
Now...
...where did our police officer disappear to? And his delinquent little sister.

Yo, Amano. Before you check out.
You do this?

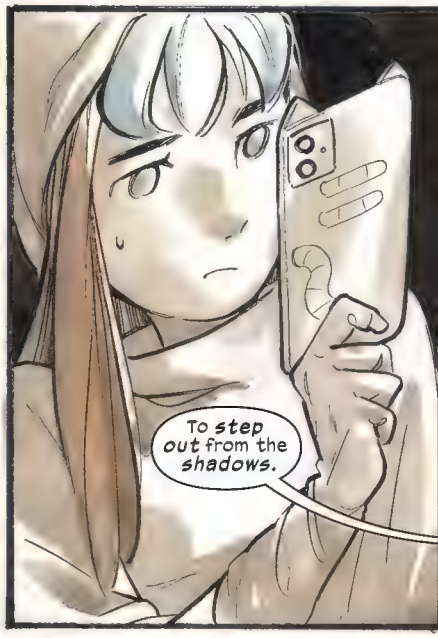
Well, that's one way to disappear.


"Things are so boring recently.
"Hurry and wake up, Kageyama."

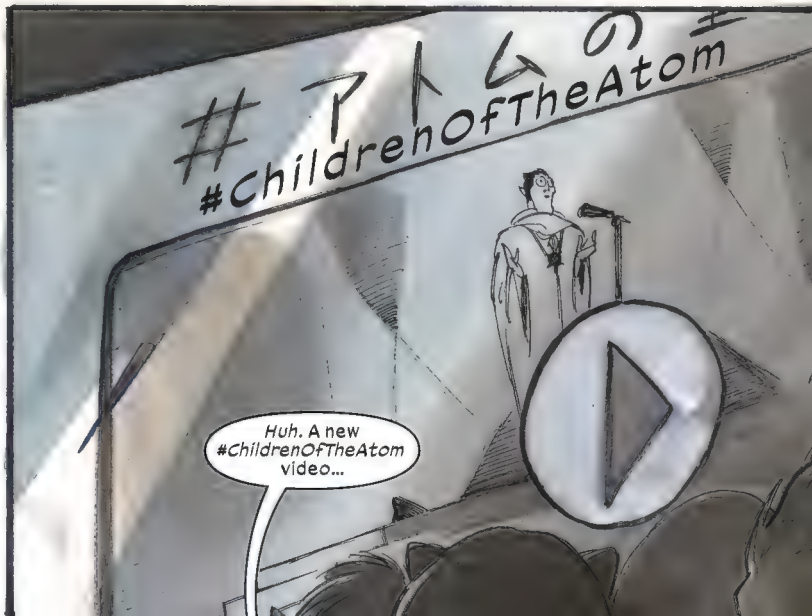

Parents, we apologize for something potentially disturbing. Images have started trending, connected somehow to a little-known religious group called "Children of the Atom."
Do we know if this image is even real? What is the proof?
No confirmation yet, Taki. But I hear that it's already stirred up quite the reaction.
Indeed it has, Taka. Teens allegedly involved in this so-called "Children of the Atom" are starting to share stories on social media, many of them quite shocking.


Now Taki, you can't believe everything you read on social media. When things go viral, people use that hashtag to spread rumors...
Children of the Atom
My number #ChildrenOfTheAtom
I'm second-generation. My number #ChildrenOfTheA

My Children of the Atom. Homo superior.
You have been warriors all your life. Fighting prejudice. Fighting hate. Standing proud against the envy of those whom evolution has left behind.
Those days are over. It is time to unleash your power.


To step out from the shadows.

And claim our rightful place.

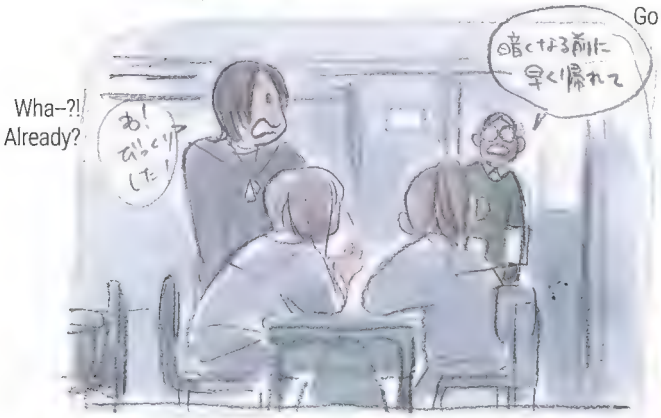

#ChildrenOfTheAtom
Huh. A new #ChildrenOfTheAtom video...

That suitcase was connected to them somehow.
It was found in Arakawa River...
#ArmorGirl is from Kirigaya Minami.
All leads point to the same place... Kirisaki City.
To step out from the shadows.
And claim our rightful place.
Does that mean... the world is coming to an end?
Yes.

LEXICON

October is the month when the day starts to feel shorter. The sun sets not long after school, so staying late to talk to friends ends in a dark classroom.

㊀が暮れるのが ぐんと早くなる月。
放課後 友達と ペちゃくちゃ話をしていると あっという間に教室が暗く
(いつものように)
なってしまう…。



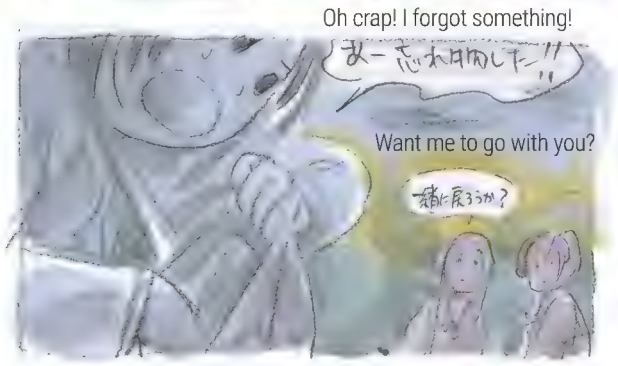
Wha–?! Already?

Go home before it gets too dark.

And if you forgot something and have to go back...

忘物を取りに戻るようなら..

It's okay, you guys go ahead. You have cram school tonight, right?



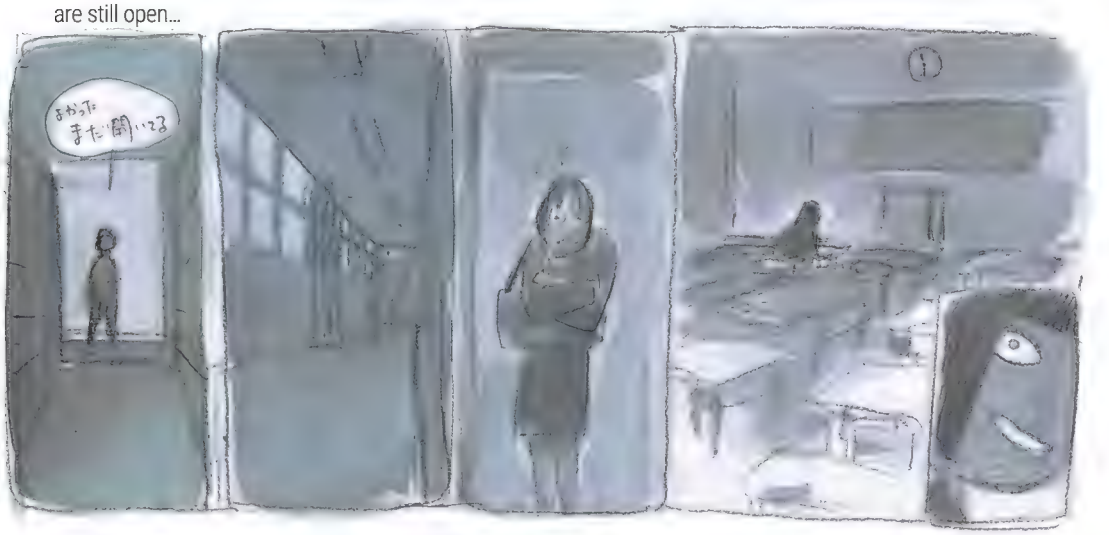
Oh crap! I forgot something!

Want me to go with you?

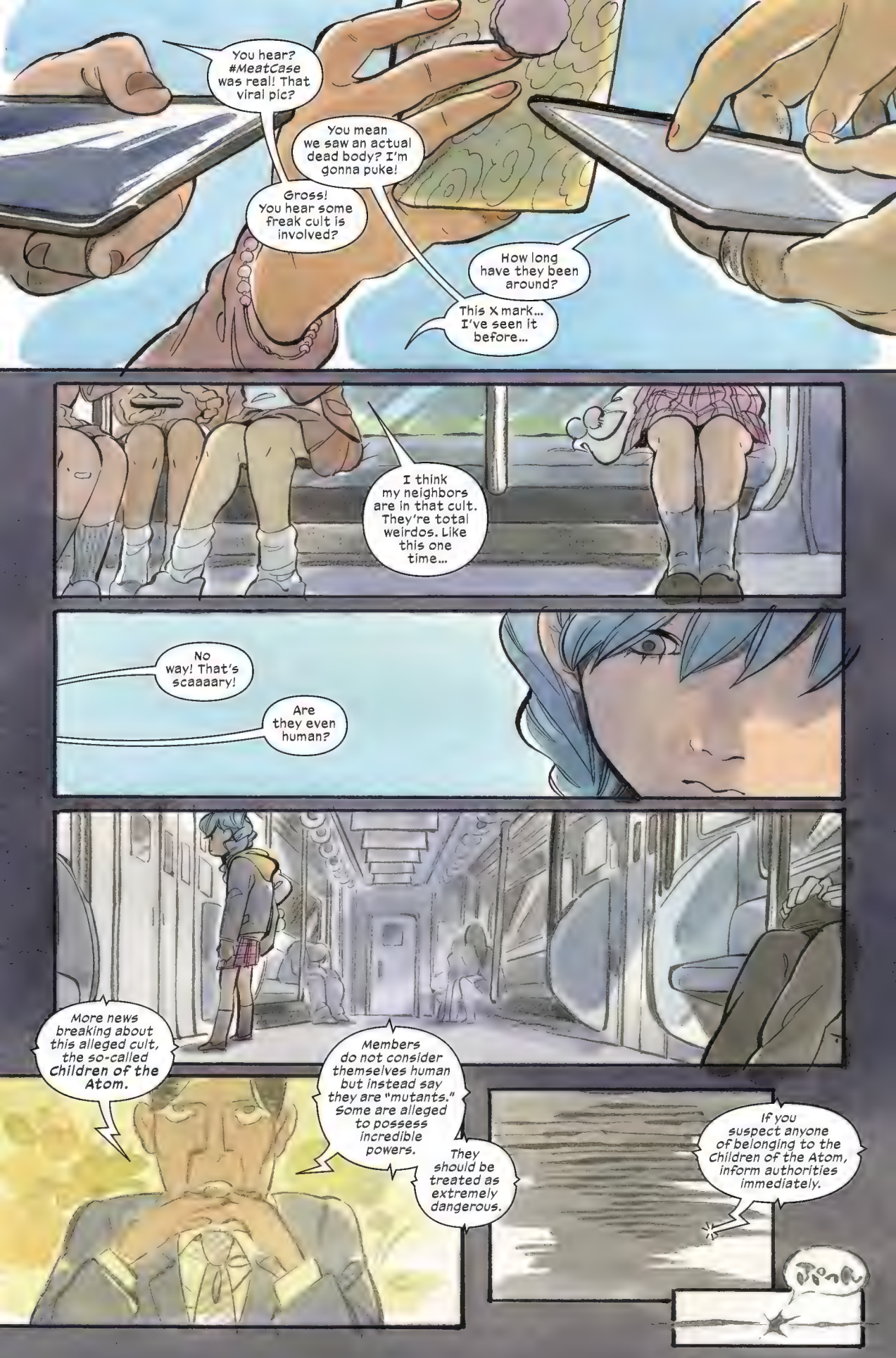
The classroom that you're used to seeing in the daytime no longer looks the same...
And in the corner of the dark classroom, you might just encounter someone who isn't from this place...

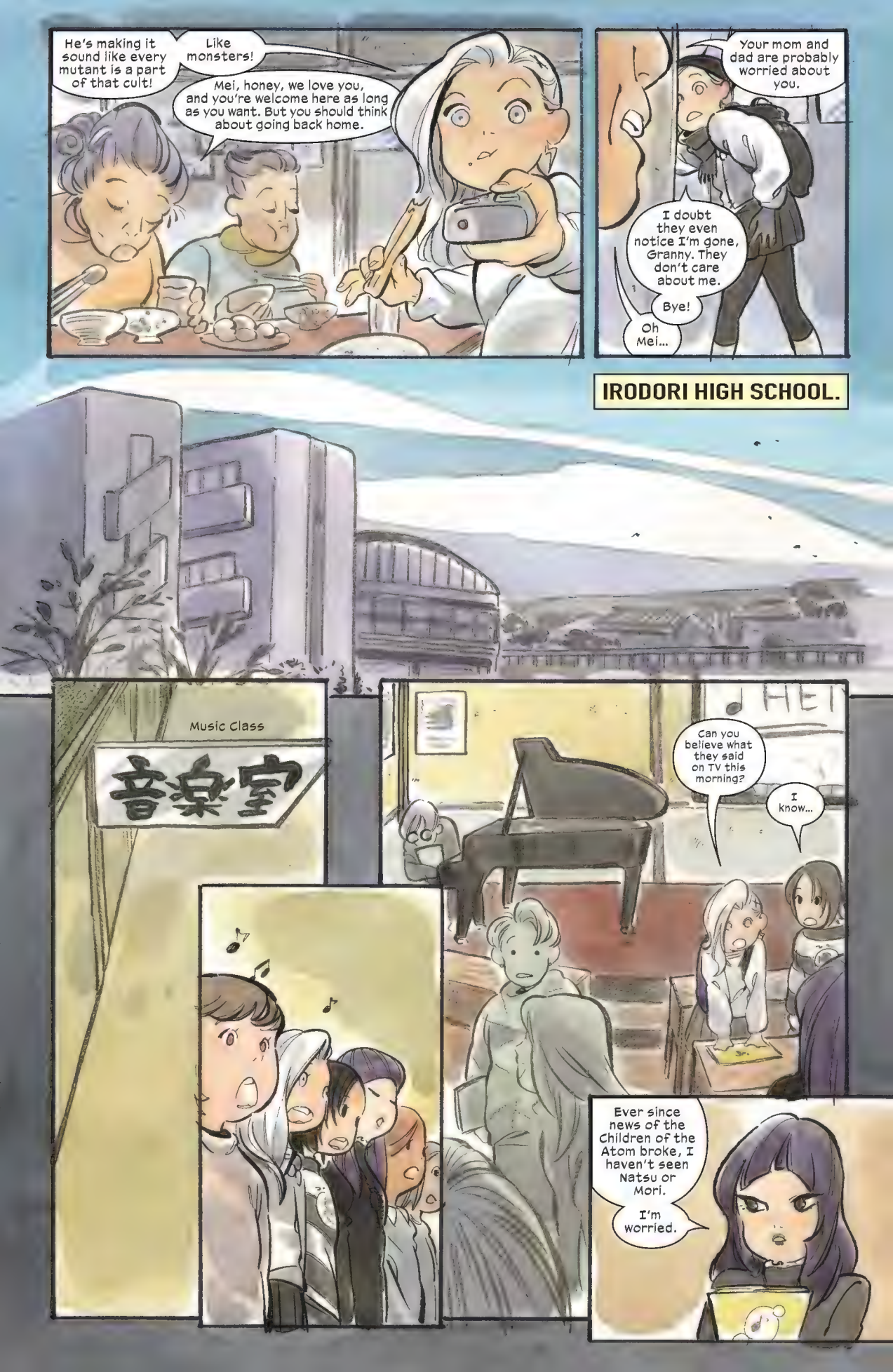
㊀中の明るかった学校は そこには無くって.... 暗い教室のすみっこには 知らない子が座っている..
かも…

Phew...the doors are still open...

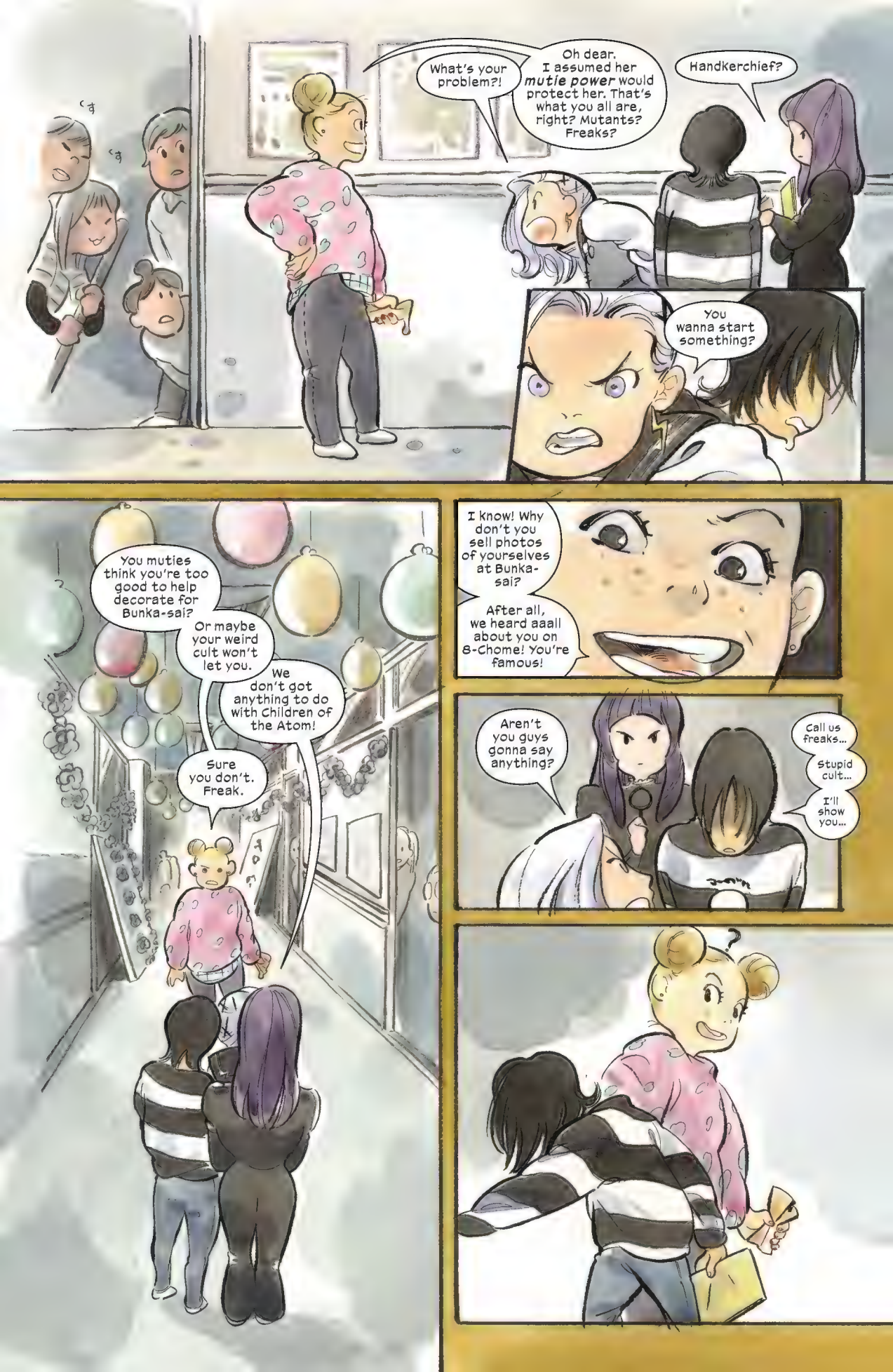


ULTIMATE 9
X-MEN


You hear? #MeatCase was real! That viral pic?
You mean we saw an actual dead body? I'm gonna puke!
Gross! You hear some freak cult is involved?
How long have they been around?
This X mark... I've seen it before...
I think my neighbors are in that cult. They're total weirdos. Like this one time...
No way! That's scaaaary!
Are they even human?
More news breaking about this alleged cult, the so-called Children of the Atom.
Members do not consider themselves human but instead say they are "mutants." Some are alleged to possess incredible powers.
They should be treated as extremely dangerous.
If you suspect anyone of belonging to the Children of the Atom, inform authorities immediately.
BEEP


He's making it sound like every mutant is a part of that cult!
Like monsters!
Mei, honey, we love you, and you're welcome here as long as you want. But you should think about going back home.
Your mom and dad are probably worried about you.
I doubt they even notice I'm gone, Granny. They don't care about me.
Bye!
Oh Mei...
IRODORI HIGH SCHOOL.
Music Class
音楽室
Can you believe what they said on TV this morning?
I know...
Ever since news of the Children of the Atom broke, I haven't seen Natsu or Mori.
I'm worried.

If Natsu is gone, it's no surprise Mori is too. I don't think I've ever seen them apart.
I don't know how involved they are with Children of the Atom, but it seems likely whatever the trouble is, they're caught up in it.
Does anyone know where they live? Nico? Maybe we can go see them.
I'm afraid I don't know. I never thought to ask.
Over there! I said put it over there!
There! Perfect!
KRRTCH BAAM
Bunka-sai again? So lame.
I thought you would be into the cultural festival, Mei.
Maybe there's too much going on. I'm just not feeling it.
Sorry! ♫ Clumsy me! ♫
Heeheee...

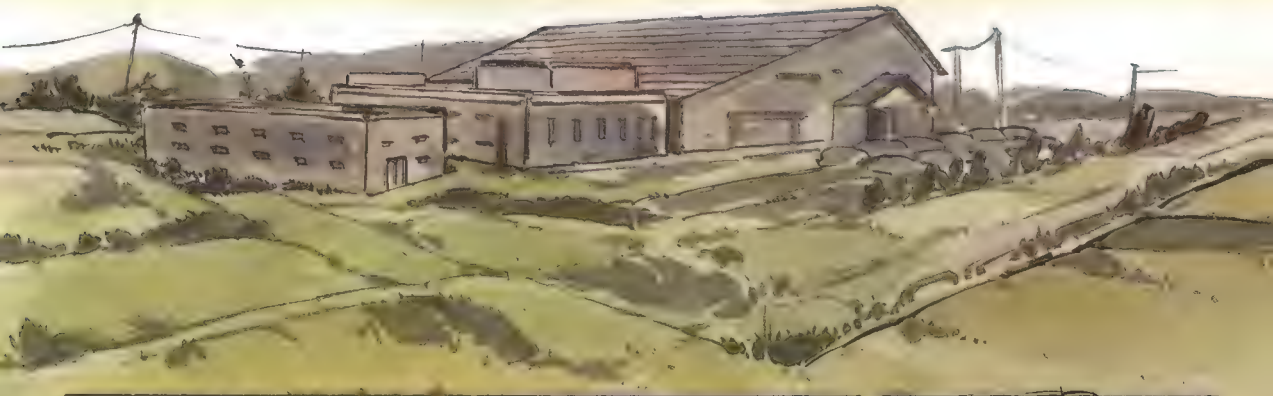

What's your problem?!
Oh dear. I assumed her *mutie power* would protect her. That's what you all are, right? Mutants? Freaks?
Handkerchief?
You wanna start something?
You muties think you're too good to help decorate for Bunka-sai?
Or maybe your weird cult won't let you.
We don't got anything to do with Children of the Atom!
Sure you don't. Freak.
I know! Why don't you sell photos of yourselves at Bunka-sai?
After all, we heard aaall about you on 8-Chome! You're famous!
Aren't you guys gonna say anything?
Call us freaks...
Stupid cult...
I'll show you...

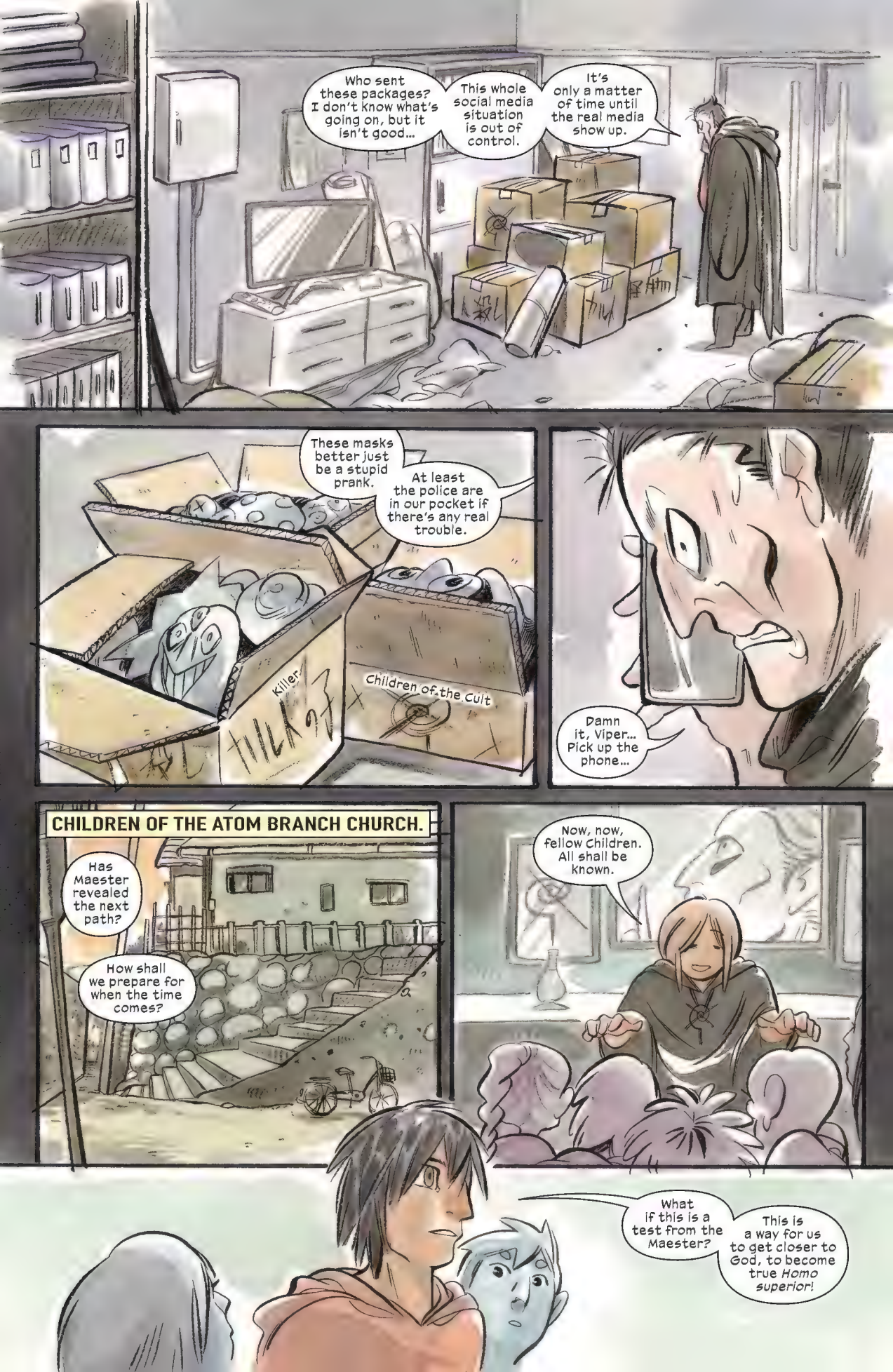
Here's your Bunka-sai!
Hi-chan snapped...
Come on! I just finished that!
I know you've been under a lot of stress due to recent events, Hisako. But that's no excuse for acting out.
職員室
Staff Room
I'm sorry. Thank you. Goodbye.
How'd it go?
I have to write a formal apology to the class.
My sympathies.

Next time we'll take 'em on together!
Thanks, Mei.
I'm worried, though. I feel like I lose control sometimes...
I might hurt someone for real.
Come on! You'd never do that! You're a hero!

"Oh, hey! You know that stalker... Kageyama? He's been awfully quiet lately.

"I bet after you went ballistic on him, he's too scared to show his face!"




Who sent these packages? I don't know what's going on, but it isn't good...
This whole social media situation is out of control.
It's only a matter of time until the real media show up.
These masks better just be a stupid prank.
At least the police are in our pocket if there's any real trouble.
Killer
Children of the Cult
Damn it, Viper... Pick up the phone...
CHILDREN OF THE ATOM BRANCH CHURCH.
Has Maester revealed the next path?
How shall we prepare for when the time comes?
Now, now, fellow Children. All shall be known.
What if this is a test from the Maester?
This is a way for us to get closer to God, to become true *Homo superior*!

Did I save the... did I save them...?
Did I save the... did I save them...?
Did I save the... did I save them...?

You're Kageyama, right? I hear you're something special. The *chosen one* of the Children of the Atom.
I'm *Akihiro*... the first *Homo superior*. I've given my blood...my power... my everything to the Children of the Atom.
The Church says we have to manifest our powers and control them. They say that we are the enlightenment. That we are closer to God.
We succeeded, right?
I'm closer to God?

Answer me, Chosen One!!!
I have nothing more to give.
Where is my divinity?
When will I be free?!
You can do it! You're the Chosen One!
Free me! Kill me!!!
Please...
You actually believe the world is coming to an end?
You are a fool.

KLIK
Mei...?!
MILK

Mom
Did you come by today?
Mom
At least say hello.
I knew she wasn't worried about me.
Dad?
What's he doing out this late?
...And where's he going?
What the hell?

HEY!!!
Mei?
Dad... what are you doing...?
Busted...
What are you doing out this late?
Your grandmother gave you a curfew. I see you disrespect *her* as well.

Is he your daaaaaddy?
He's nothing to me. Just some scumbag.
Hey! You're not getting off that easy!
Not so fast.

You just cost me a night's work. You at least owe me some fun. Don't you think so...
...Mei.
H-how do you know my name?
I know so much more than your name.
Why don't you show me that wind power of yours? It was so beautiful.
Is that why you targeted my dad? To get to me?
Oh, that was just coincidence. Fathers are the easiest mark--I just hang out with them and they shell out cash.
Or maybe it was fate. Wanna team up and make some money? You know how it works--just talk and maybe go out for some food. It's not like you're sleeping with them.
After all, what's the point of power if you don't use it?

You're a mutant too?!
Call me Surge.

SWWfff
Surge...that number...
Badass, right?
Is that... the Children of the Atom?
Those lunatics think they're gonna save the world. Who cares? The world can go to Hell.
But they knew what they were doing. They jabbed and poked people until they got the formula right. That's *me*.
I used them for what I wanted. To become special.
Isn't that what all parents want for their kids? To be special.

Y-you mean they experimented on you? They made you?
Is that what those dead bodies were for?
Who cares about the failures?
How can you say that? Do you really think you're any better?
I'm here, aren't I? That makes me the winner.
People died to give you those powers. You should use them to help!
Not prey on people's fathers...
You serious? You're gonna lecture me?
Youdon't knowathing aboutme!!!
KRAAAK
110 FL

YEAAAAARRRG!!!
I hope this works...

KZZZZ
ZZTTTT
KRAKA
THOOM

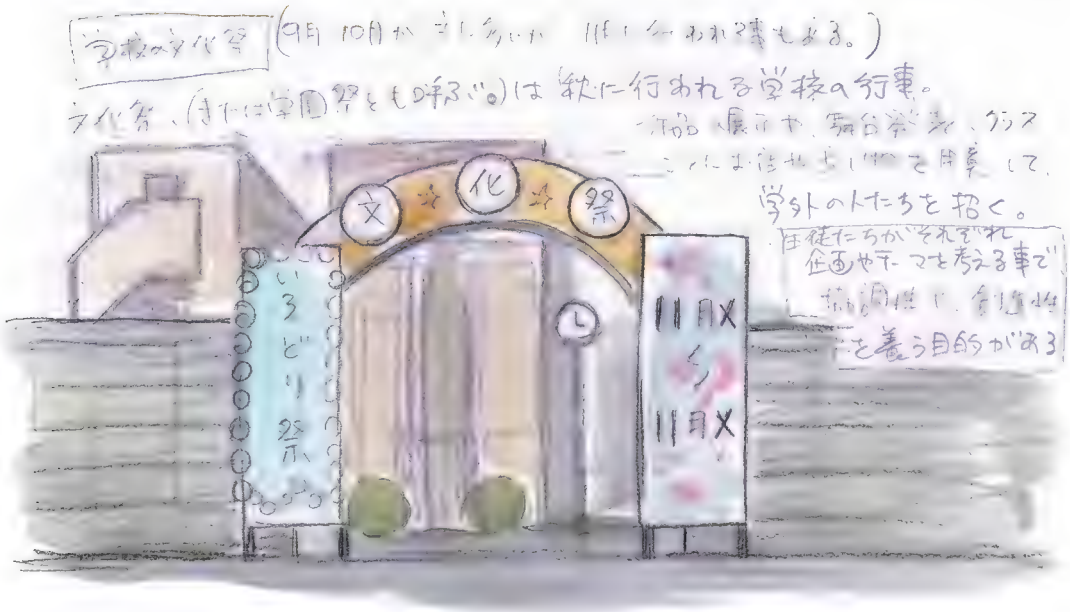
Hey... you okay? I think I overdid it--I can't control my powers...
Ambulance... I'll call an ambulance...
No...
Call my mom... If they know, they'll come after me too.

LEXICON

SCHOOL BUNKA-SAI

Bunka-sai is a school cultural festival that happens generally in September or October, though some schools hold it in November.

Students set up booths throughout the school such as shops, cafes, restaurants, photo booths and more, as well as stage performances and exhibitions of student art and photography, with their classes.



This helps students learn cooperation and creativity by having to work together to come up with their own plans and themes.

During the festival, the school is open to the public.

School hallways are decorated with balloons and paper flowers.

Some students even turn their classrooms into a haunted house.

The gym and court spaces are used for live music.

#10 HOLIDAY VARIANT BY **NAO FUJI**

ULTIMATE
X-MEN
10

Mutants get out!
Mutants are among us!
Monster!
Get out of town!
Papa, I'm scared...
Mio. Ritsu. It'll be okay.
出てけ!
Akane! Don't open that window! You're scaring our kids.
No! We're not spending our lives living in fear. Mio, come here!
M-Mom? What are you doing?

There! It's her!
Do it, Mio! Show them what you can do!
NO!
You can't make me!
Ritsu...?

My Children of the Atom, far too long we have suffered, hiding our true faces. Meanwhile, our persecutors continued their march toward Armageddon. I, your Maester, know this to be true.
But we stand together! That is our strength! That is our power!
This is only the beginning, my children. Our time has come. As revealed in the Testament of X, we will show the world--
--that it is we who are superior!!!
Our Maester has spoken.
Does this mean... we're going to war?
I'm scared...
Don't worry. This is what we've been training for. We'll be ready.
We're at the house where it's believed the so-called *Children of the Atom* have been hiding...
Hold on. It looks like...
They're coming out!!!
Do you have any comment on the rumors about the Children of the Atom?
Is it true you're mutant terrorists?
Are you leaving to make a statement?
Take off your robes! What are you hiding?
Ow... Please stop...

Now.
What do you know about that suitcase found near Arakawa River?
We've heard rumors of human experimentation! Is that what's been done to you?
?
HYEEAAAAAAHHH!!!

HISAKO'S HOUSE.
DING DONG
Who's here so eaaaarly?
I know! And just when I'm getting ready for work!
Hello...?
Is Hisako Ichiki home?
Mom? What's going on?
Our apologies for intruding on you so early in the morning. We'll get straight to the point.
Hisako, what do you know about the three boys on the Kirigaya Minami Middle School basketball team?
What? How dare you come here and ask my daughter that! I need you to leave.
Do you have any idea what it's like to lose a child?!
Mrs. Murata, please...
My son would never take his own life... Hisako, you must know something.
Tell me! Please!!!

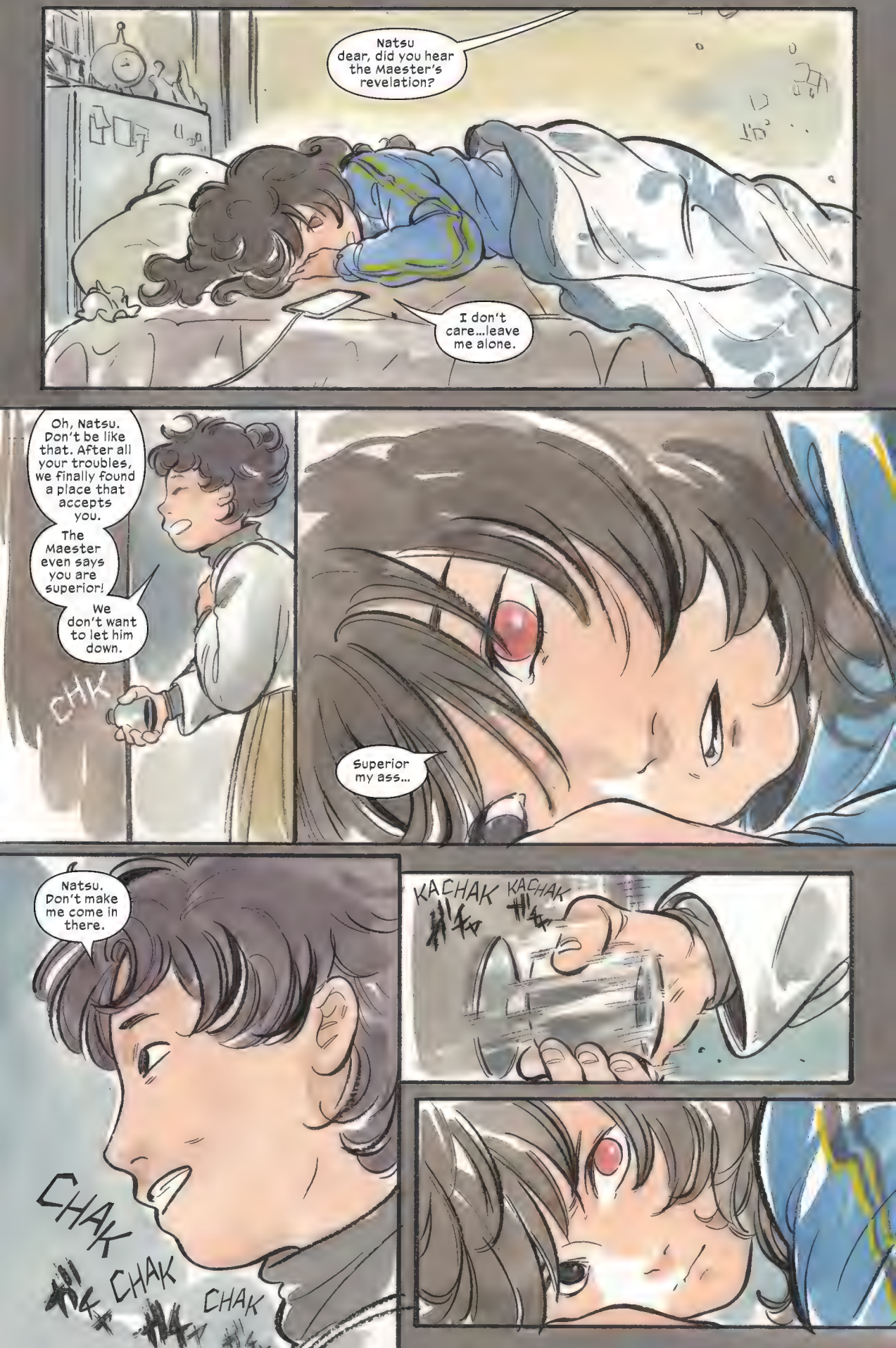
I'm sorry about your kids, but it has nothing to do with us.
Please leave.
You're one of the Children of the Atom!!!
You killed my son!!!
Hisako! Call the police!
Mom, you got no clue.
You think we were your perfect little babies?
Do you want to know what we did to Tsubasa...?
Huh? My omamori?
Sh-Sho...? My boy...?

We'll show you.
Sho... Please... stop...!!!
Ahhhh!!! A monster!!!
Wha... what???

Huh? Tsubasa?!
Hisako, stop!
Mom?
What are you doing?!
I don't... What?

What was that?
Hisako, what was that red...aura?! Did you do that?!
Mrs. Murata? Are you okay?

You cut your hair.
You lost weight.
...
Lotsa stuff going on. You see, Kageyama?
Those dummies actually believe the Maester.
I guess. So what, Ashida?
So...you wanna join the party?
Hmm... maybe it's time...

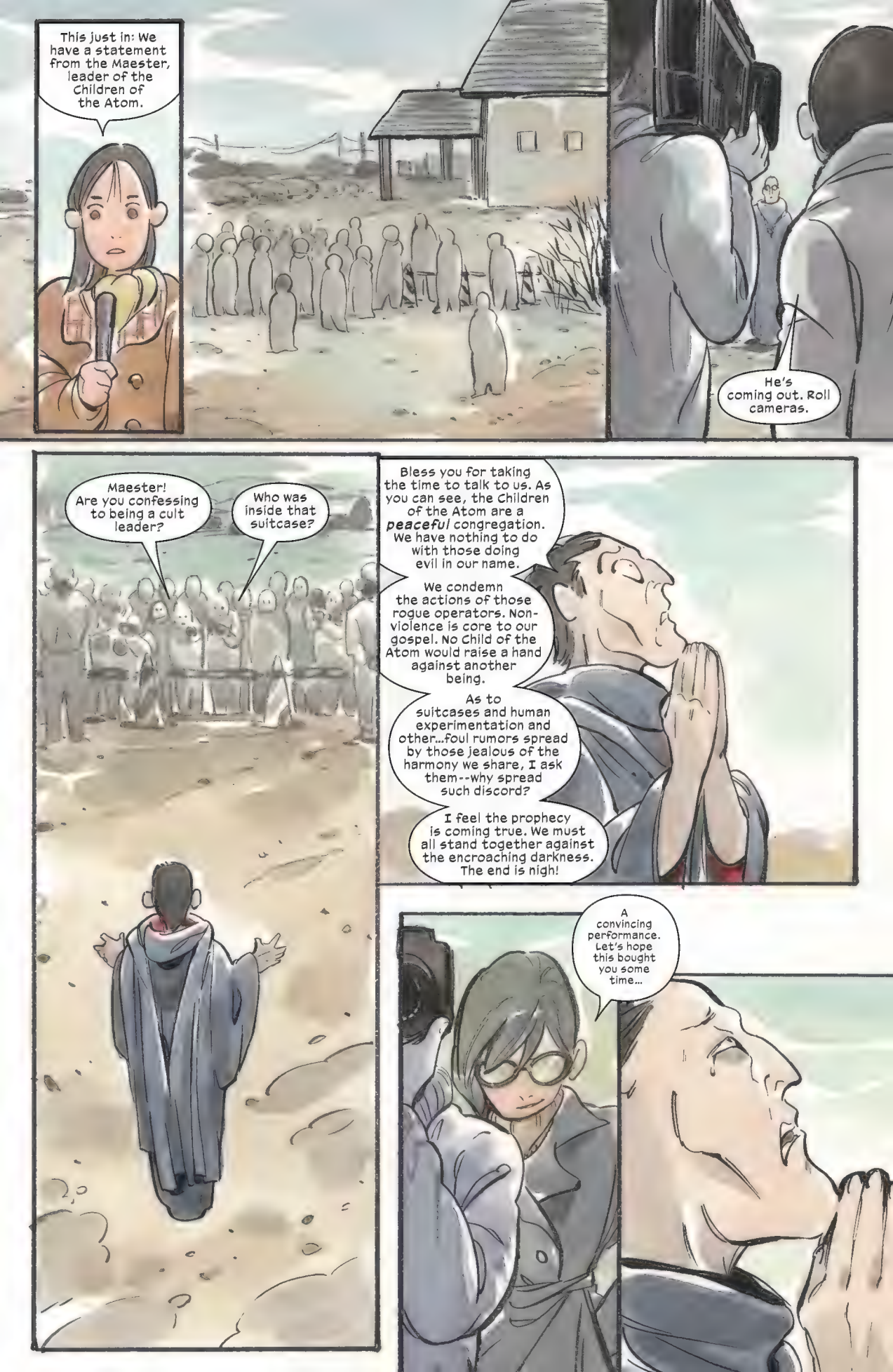

Natsu dear, did you hear the Maester's revelation?
I don't care...leave me alone.
Oh, Natsu. Don't be like that. After all your troubles, we finally found a place that accepts you.
The Maester even says you are superior!
We don't want to let him down.
CHK
Superior my ass...
Natsu. Don't make me come in there.
CHAK
CHAK
CHAK
KACHAK
KACHAK

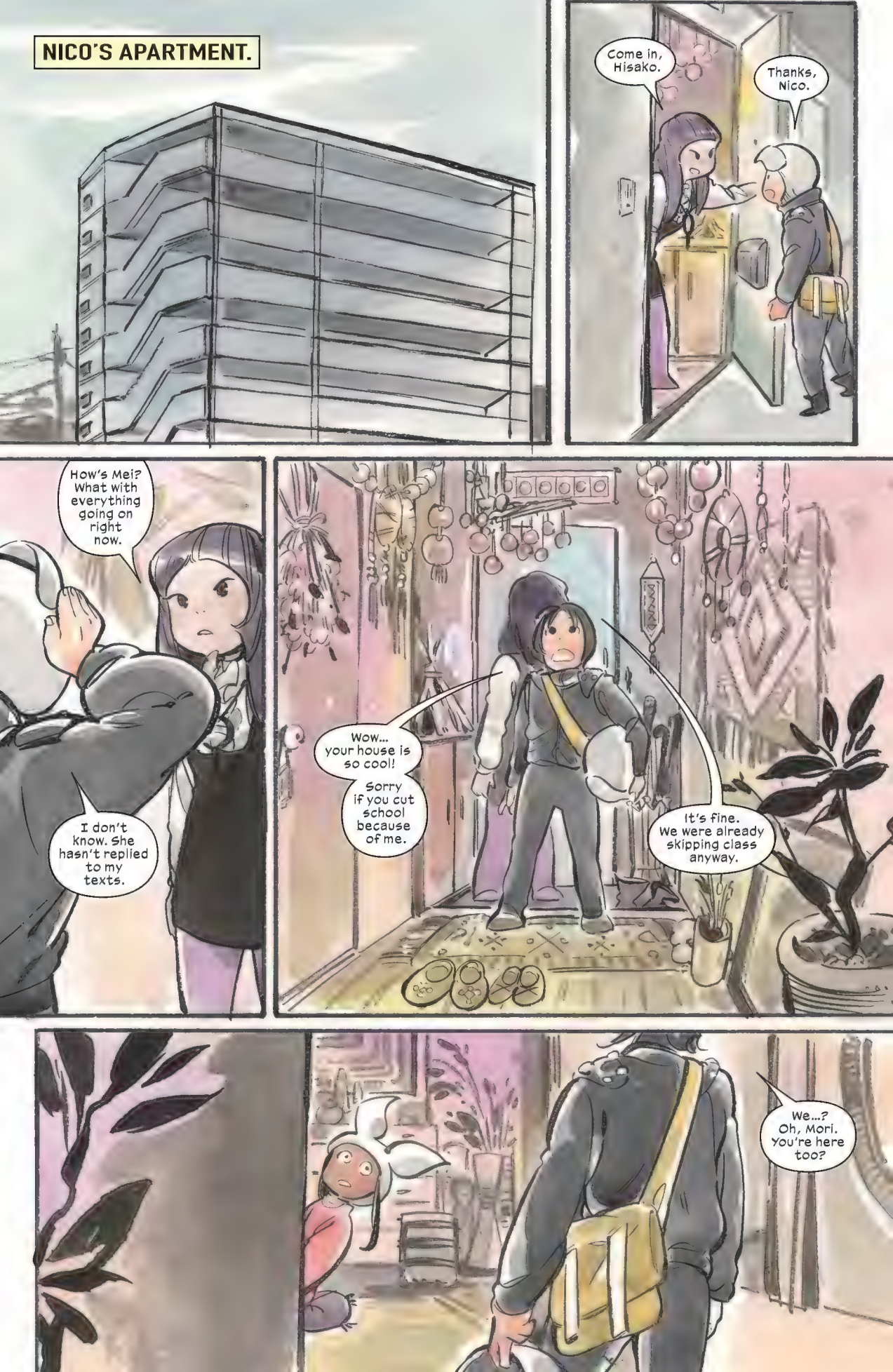
I'm your mother! Don't you dare use your optic blasts on me!!!
After all I've done for you... you're *still* a failure!!!
Mom...?

Mom!!!
Get up...
Mom!!!
Make me stop...
Tell me I'm a failure...
Like you always do...
...Mom...

Fujiwara, what are you playing at?
I swear this isn't my doing. I didn't say a thing.
You're telling me your conditioned, mind-controlled army decided to act on their own for no reason?
I swear, I don't know what's happening.
Fujiwara, you are the Maester. Your entire role in this is to control the Children of the Atom.
If you are not capable of that, you have no value. Our deal will be dissolved.
U-understood, Viper...
Consider this your final chance. Deliver what you promised.
Dammit!!!
Blood... I need power...!

In light of recent attacks by mutants, why should we not be afraid of you?
Do you believe your abilities set you above humanity?
That wasn't even us.
Besides, that was self-defense. You flatscans attacked first!
We got a right to defend ourselves!
Can you comment on rumors of human experimentation?
Are your mutations natural or induced? Were you born this way?
Look, some mutants are born different. For some, it happens later.
And it's science, not experimentation. Why not make people better? It's no different from wearing glasses or having a pacemaker. It's all in how you look at it...
Maester taught us to live in peace but prepare for war.
He said the time would come when the righteous would need to rise up against the unworthy. To save the Earth. Now...that time has come.
Being born blue doesn't make you holy.
I was born a mutant and I have powers. But I'm not part of those Children of the Atom weirdos.
Mutant flex. LOL.
Wait, experiments? Does that mean they were made? They weren't born mutants?
...obviously mind-controlled.
I'm sure they felt alienated. The Children of the Atom must've given them somewhere to belong.
Dude. They're doing human sacrifices.
We were violently attacked unprovoked by the Children of the Atom.
Where are the police? All muties need to be put in jail.


This just in: We have a statement from the Maester, leader of the Children of the Atom.
He's coming out. Roll cameras.
Maester! Are you confessing to being a cult leader?
Who was inside that suitcase?
Bless you for taking the time to talk to us. As you can see, the Children of the Atom are a *peaceful* congregation. We have nothing to do with those doing evil in our name.
We condemn the actions of those rogue operators. Non-violence is core to our gospel. No Child of the Atom would raise a hand against another being.
As to suitcases and human experimentation and other...foul rumors spread by those jealous of the harmony we share, I ask them--why spread such discord?
I feel the prophecy is coming true. We must all stand together against the encroaching darkness. The end is nigh!
A convincing performance. Let's hope this bought you some time...


NICO'S APARTMENT.
Come in, Hisako.
Thanks, Nico.
How's Mei? What with everything going on right now.
I don't know. She hasn't replied to my texts.
Wow... your house is so cool!
Sorry if you cut school because of me.
It's fine. We were already skipping class anyway.
We...? Oh, Mori. You're here too?

Something really bad's going on. Look at this text from Natsu...
I hurt someone again… my mom. I can't see you anymore. I don't want to hurt anyone else…
What's wrong? On my way.
In front of ur house. U home?
What does she mean... *again?*
I just heard the story from Mori. Apparently, Natsu did something to a classmate.
The classmate died soon after...a tragic accident, but Natsu blames herself.
I stood in front of her house for an hour, but she never came out.
Everyone's acting so weird.
How about you, Hisako--everything okay? You sounded scared on the phone.
I think I also... hurt some people with my powers. My mom is upset. And probably worried.
But I can't go back right now. Too much happened...
...
So, what do you propose?
We accomplish nothing just sitting around my home.
It's so crazy. It all started with some stalker. And now it's...so huge. I just can't...

Tut tut. No matter how it began, we're all involved now.
Past time to take matters into our own hands.
What? Are you going to school?
No. I'm going to find Natsu.
Let's go!
THE ABANDONED OFFICE OF THE CHILDREN OF THE ATOM.

ニコ・ミノル

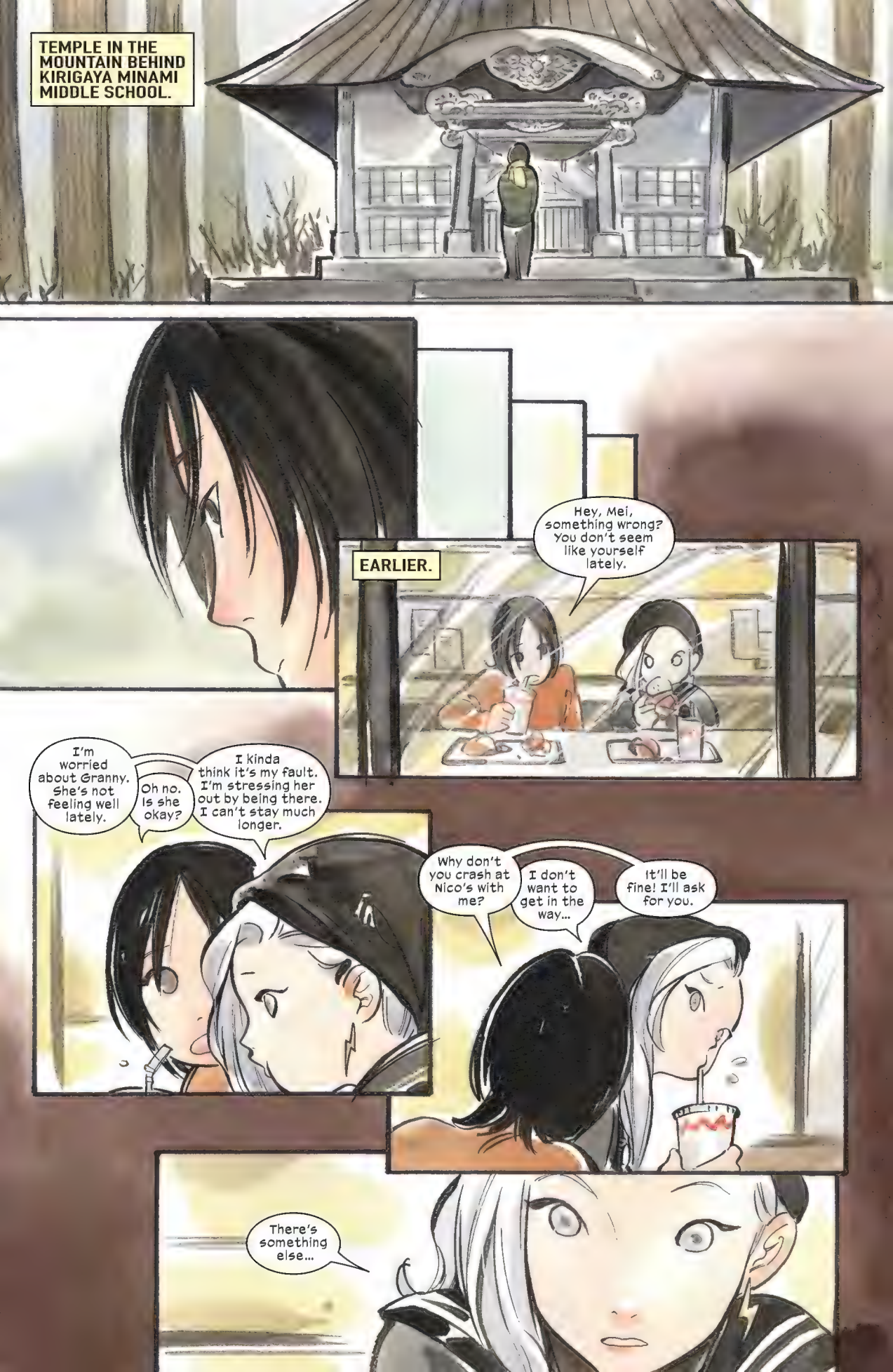
INSIDE NICO MINORU'S BACKPACK AND WARDROBE

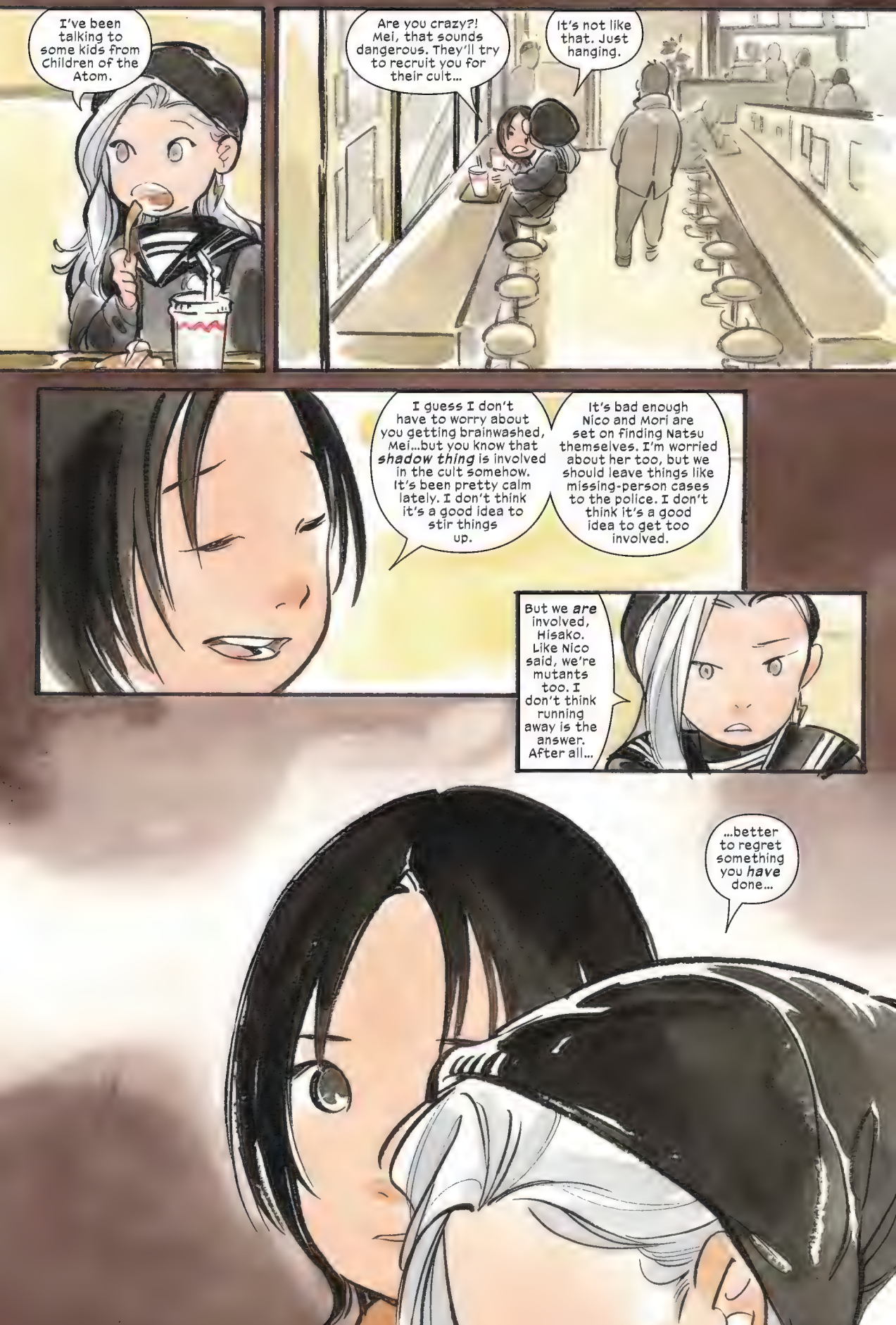
ULTIMATE
X-MEN
11

DING DONG
Whoa. #MeatCase isn't trending anymore.
No one's home.
Mori, was Natsu an only child?
Yeah.
So just her and her mother?
Yeah.
Interesting...
What?! No way!
Nico, did your magic wand just turn into a key?!
Knock knock. Excuse me...
Are we seriously just breaking in? We should at least wait for Hisako.
Hisako is at Hatsumode with Mei.

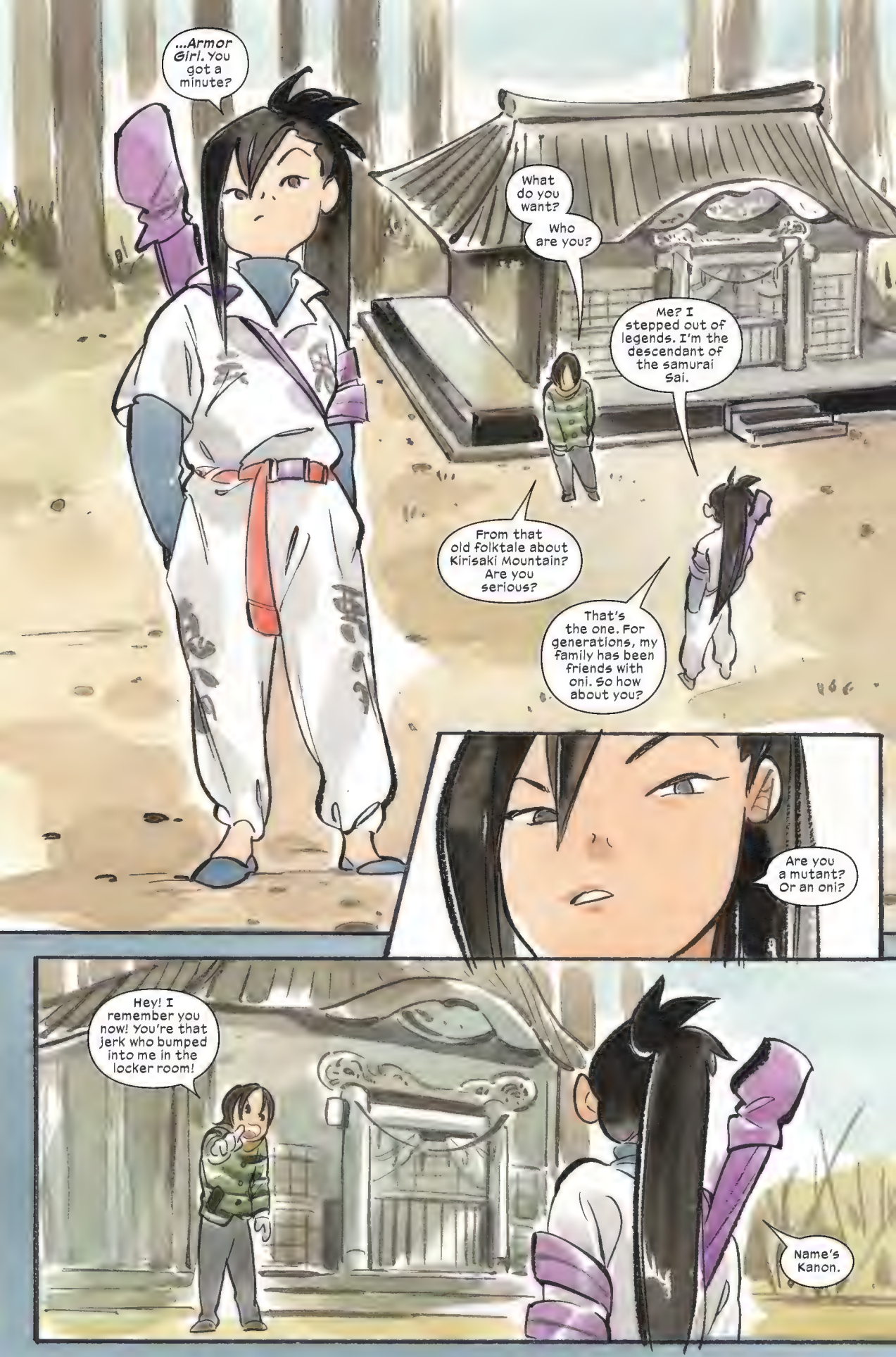
Hello? Is anyone home?
We shouldn't be doing this... Let's go back...
You want to find Natsu, don't you? We need some kind of lead.
Yeah, but...this is trespassing...
Now, where is Natsu's room?
Look at these holes! This must've been Natsu!
This is real bad...

What could have happened...?
Natsu...


TEMPLE IN THE MOUNTAIN BEHIND KIRIGAYA MINAMI MIDDLE SCHOOL.
EARLIER.
Hey, Mei, something wrong? You don't seem like yourself lately.
I'm worried about Granny. She's not feeling well lately.
Oh no. Is she okay?
I kinda think it's my fault. I'm stressing her out by being there. I can't stay much longer.
Why don't you crash at Nico's with me?
I don't want to get in the way...
It'll be fine! I'll ask for you.
There's something else...


I've been talking to some kids from Children of the Atom.
Are you crazy?! Mei, that sounds dangerous. They'll try to recruit you for their cult...
It's not like that. Just hanging.
I guess I don't have to worry about you getting brainwashed, Mei...but you know that ***shadow thing*** is involved in the cult somehow. It's been pretty calm lately. I don't think it's a good idea to stir things up.
It's bad enough Nico and Mori are set on finding Natsu themselves. I'm worried about her too, but we should leave things like missing-person cases to the police. I don't think it's a good idea to get too involved.
But we ***are*** involved, Hisako. Like Nico said, we're mutants too. I don't think running away is the answer. After all...
...better to regret something you ***have*** done...

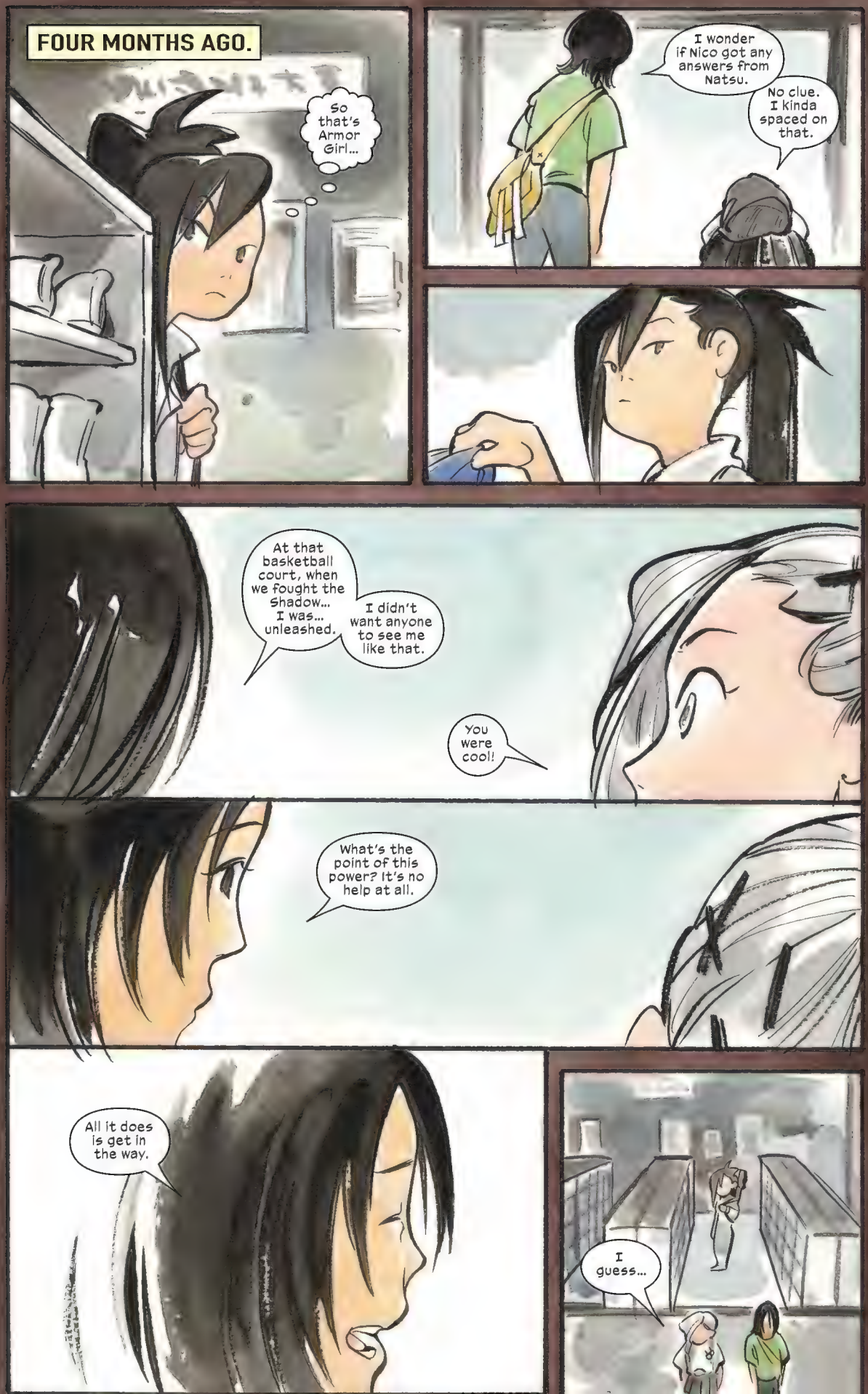
"...than something you *haven't.*"
Mei is so strong. So confident.
Why am I...
...like this...?
!!!
That shadow--?
There you are...


...Armor Girl. You got a minute?
What do you want?
Who are you?
Me? I stepped out of legends. I'm the descendant of the samurai Sai.
From that old folktale about Kirisaki Mountain? Are you serious?
That's the one. For generations, my family has been friends with oni. So how about you?
Are you a mutant? Or an oni?
Hey! I remember you now! You're that jerk who bumped into me in the locker room!
Name's Kanon.

I don't know what your deal is, but I don't have time for games.
Not so fast.
I bumped into you because I smelled something special from you.
Let's see what you got, Armor Girl.
Stop calling me that!!!
There she is.
That's who I wanted to meet.

Your power's mostly defensive, isn't it?
Me, I prefer offense.

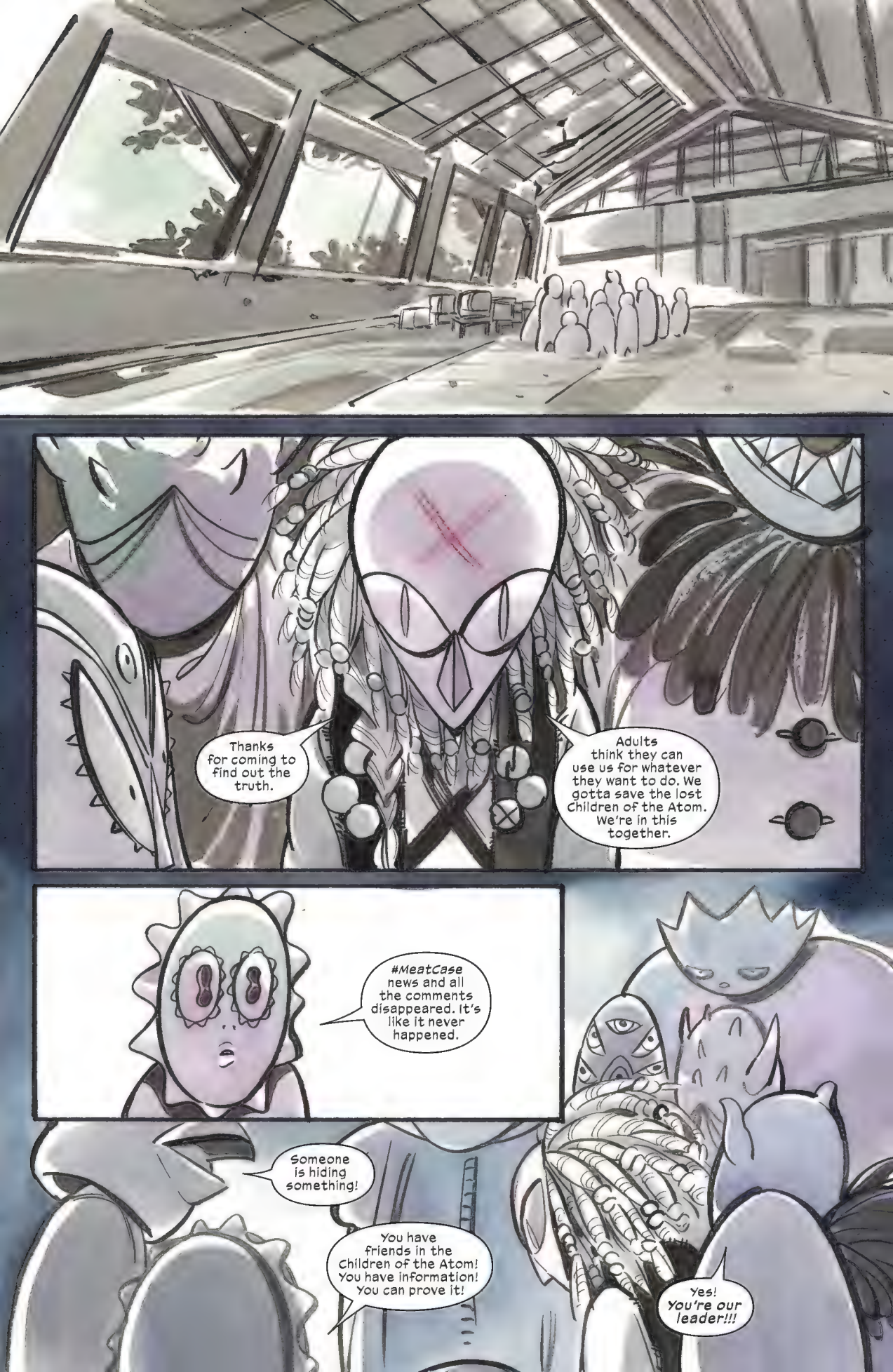
KRRAAAAK
Is that it? I thought you'd bring more.
Why should I? I don't even know who you are.
I don't fight without reason.
You don't fight even if someone *does* give you a reason, from what I've seen.

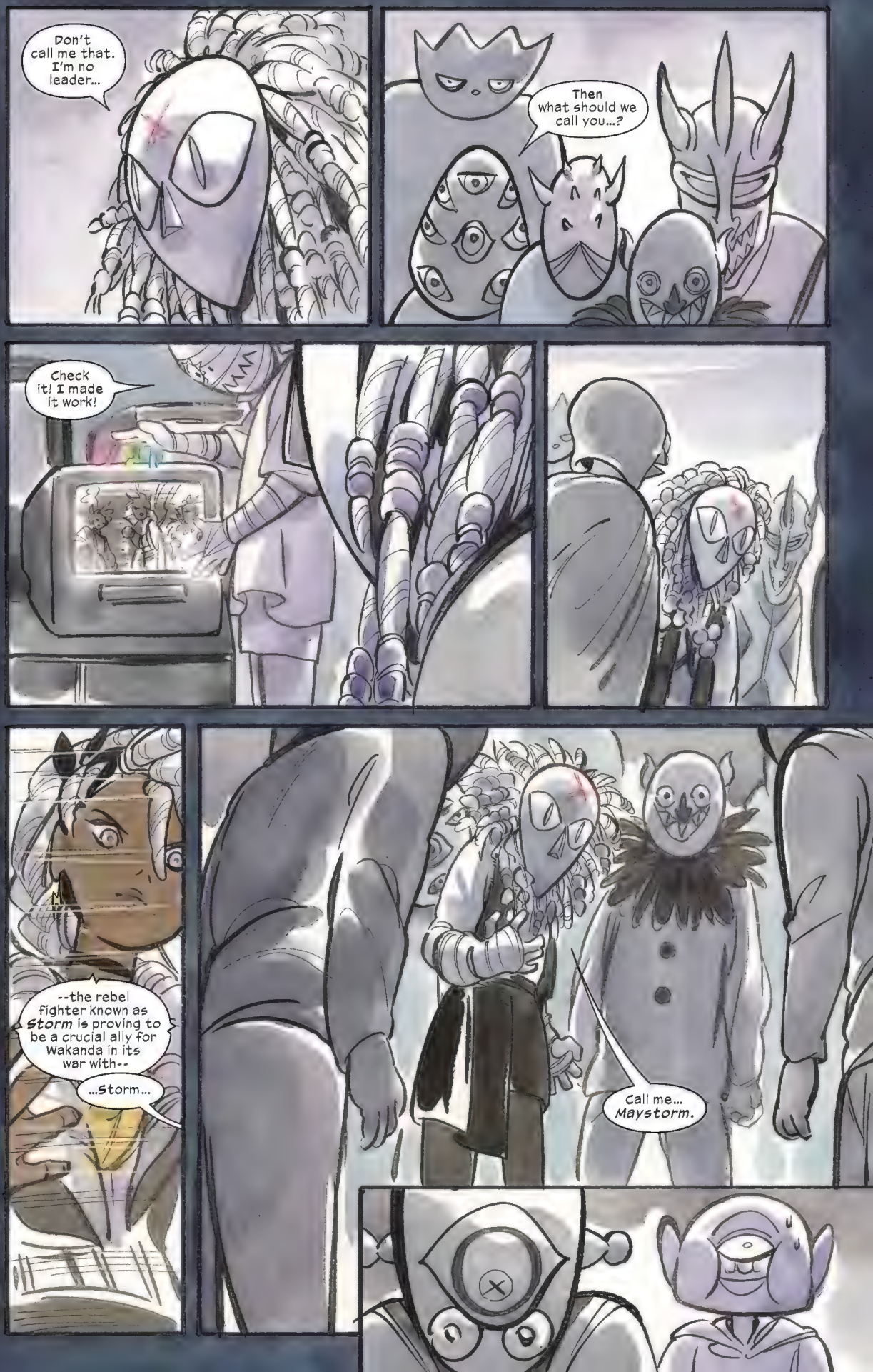

FOUR MONTHS AGO.
So that's Armor Girl...
I wonder if Nico got any answers from Natsu.
No clue. I kinda spaced on that.
At that basketball court, when we fought the Shadow... I was... unleashed.
I didn't want anyone to see me like that.
You were cool!
What's the point of this power? It's no help at all.
All it does is get in the way.
I guess...

Don't pretend you know me.
I'm not some character in whatever story you're making.
You know that #MeatCase? I'm the one who found it.
So what?
Aren't you scared *you* could be in the next suitcase?
Whatever happens, life is just a game. I'll keep playing until the end.

Anything new about #MeatCase?
Zero.
Have you seen this cat meme?
So. Cute.
You see that? What's going on in New York?
No. What happened?
The new Black Cat pulled off a massive heist.
Oh, Shinobu. You're home. You really shouldn't be going out. You're still healing.

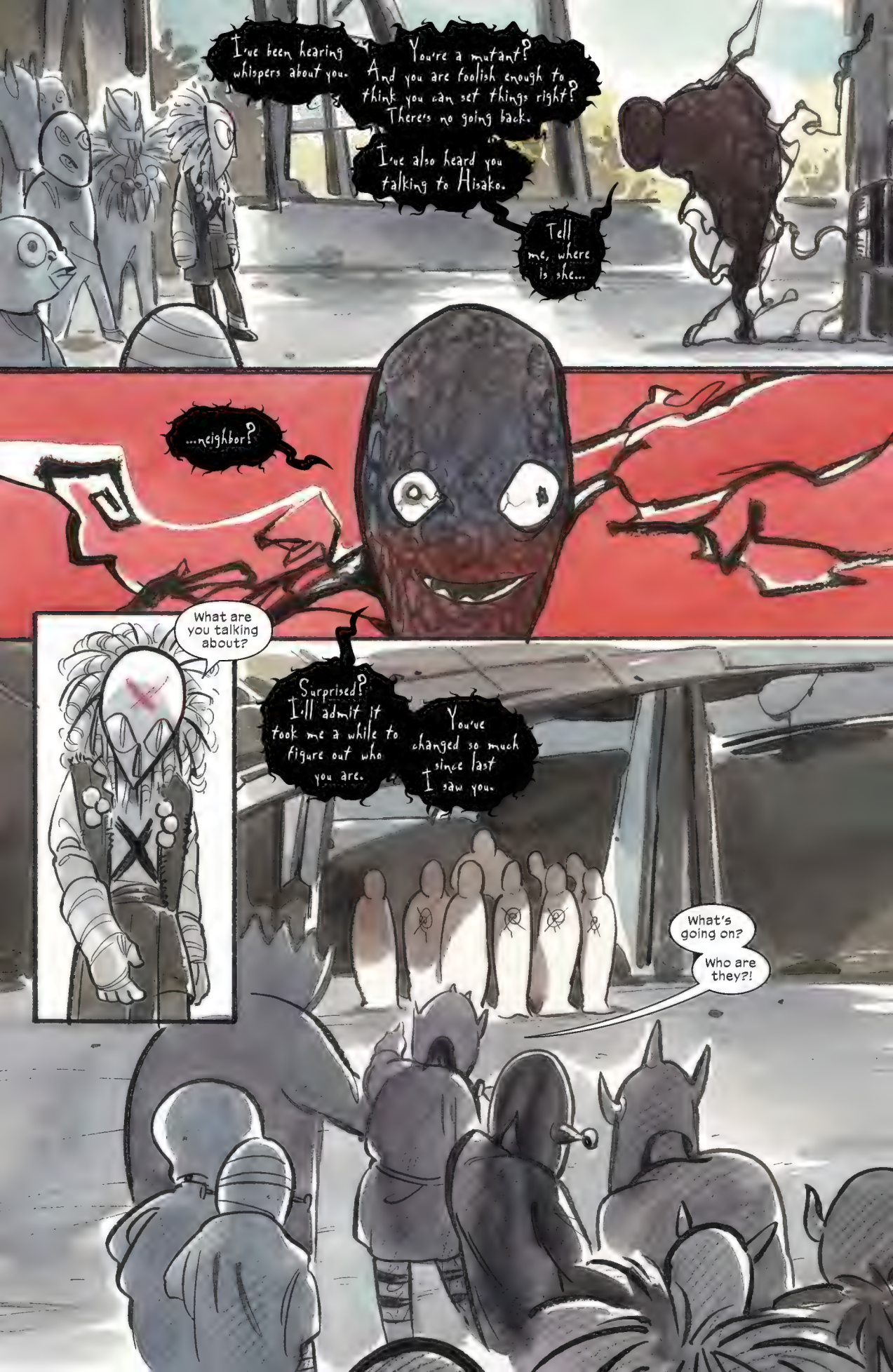
SLAM
Dinner's almost ready. When you're done, wash up and come on down.


Thanks for coming to find out the truth.
Adults think they can use us for whatever they want to do. We gotta save the lost Children of the Atom. We're in this together.
#MeatCase news and all the comments disappeared. It's like it never happened.
Someone is hiding something!
You have friends in the Children of the Atom! You have information! You can prove it!
Yes! You're our leader!!!


Don't call me that. I'm no leader...
Then what should we call you...?
Check it! I made it work!
--the rebel fighter known as Storm is proving to be a crucial ally for Wakanda in its war with--
...Storm...
Call me... Maystorm.

What the hell is that?
!?

What is that?!?
That is something that's been a pain in my ass for months.
Harassing me and my friends...
He's one of the Children of the Atom.
Is he an enemy?
I thought he was. But he's a victim just like us.
What nonsense are you speaking?


I've been hearing whispers about you.
You're a mutant? And you are foolish enough to think you can set things right? There's no going back.
I've also heard you talking to Hisako.
Tell me, where is she...
...neighbor?
What are you talking about?
Surprised? I'll admit it took me a while to figure out who you are.
You've changed so much since last I saw you.
What's going on?
Who are they?!

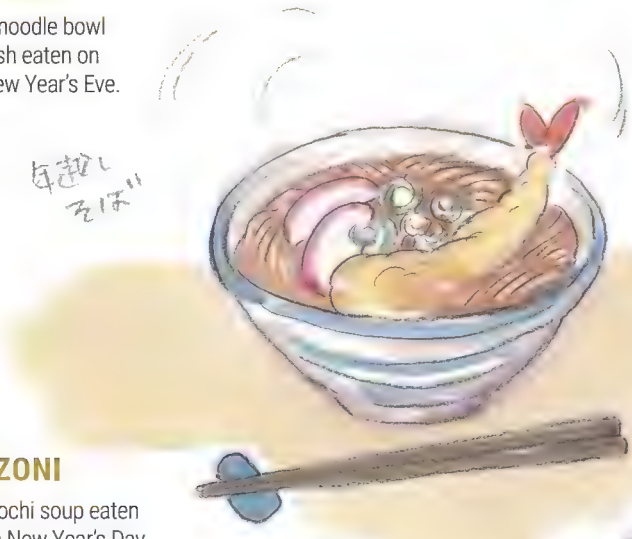
That symbol...are they Children of the Atom?
Are they mutants like us...?
Maystorm, what do we do? Do we fight, or...?
I'm not here to fight the Children of the Atom.
I want to save them.
I loathe hypocrites like you.
...What the hell is going on...?

LEXICON

NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS

TOSHIKOSHI SOBA

A noodle bowl dish eaten on New Year's Eve.



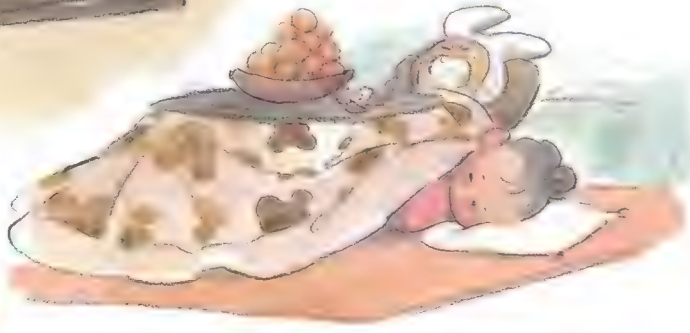
KAGAMI MOCHI

Rice cakes with daidai (a type of orange) on top. The mochi is eaten for good luck.

OZONI

Mochi soup eaten on New Year's Day.

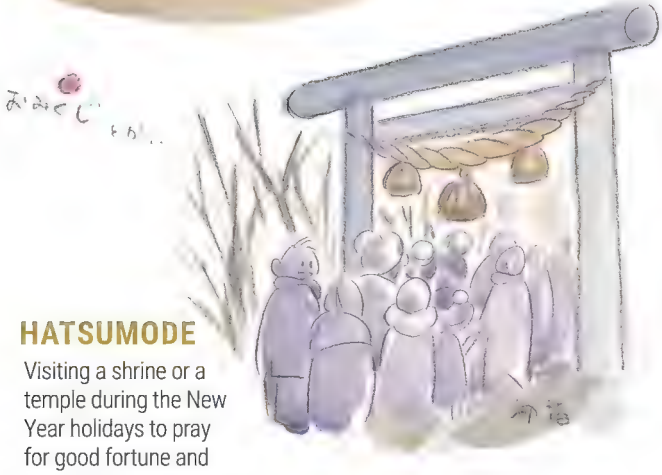
KOTATSU & MANDARIN ORANGES



A kotatsu is a heated table found in Japanese homes. Peeling and eating oranges while sitting under the kotatsu is a common winter tradition.

HATSUMODE

Visiting a shrine or a temple during the New Year holidays to pray for good fortune and ward off bad omens for the coming year.



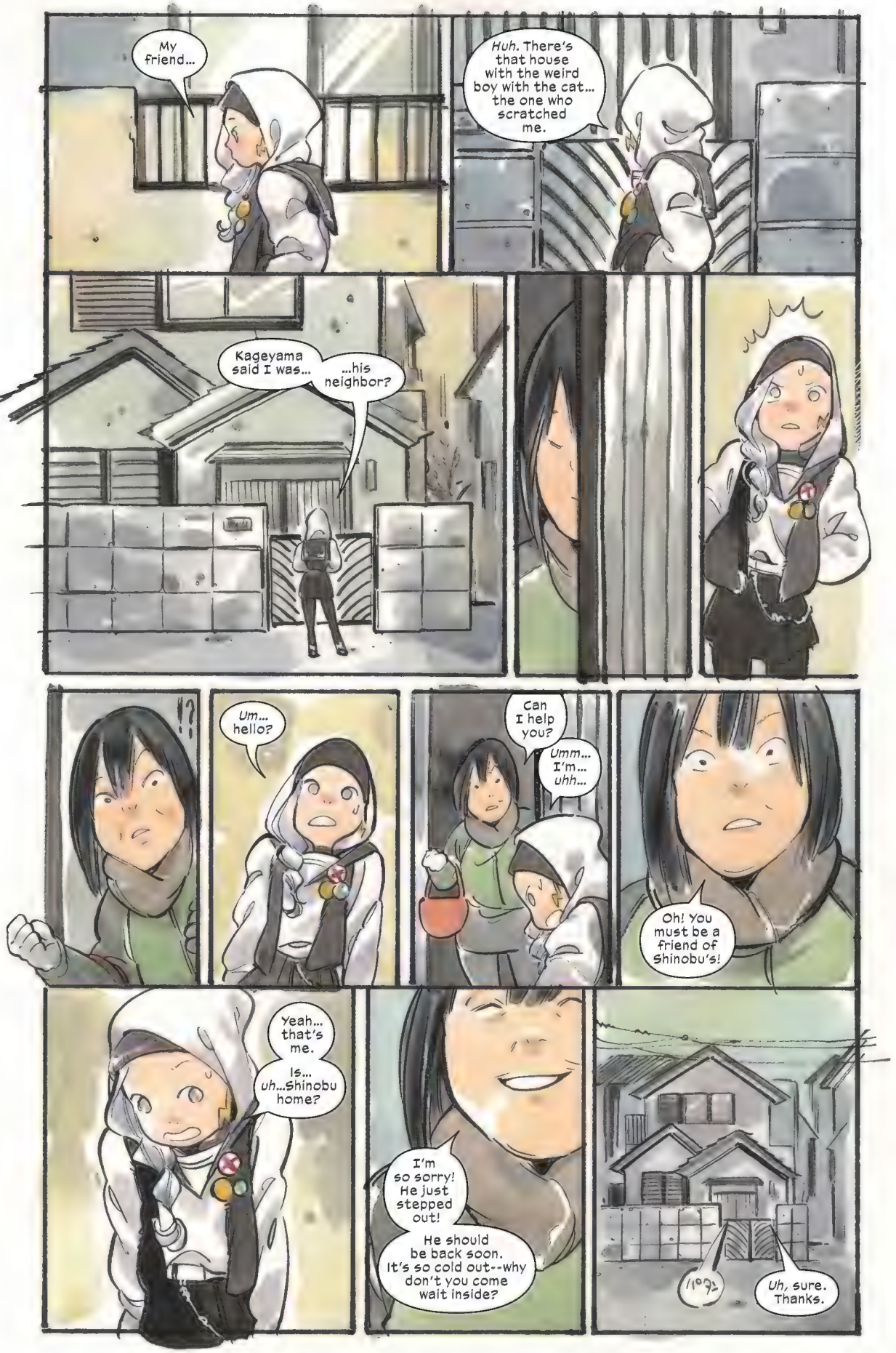
ULTIMATE
X-MEN
12

Yukio, how did you get this footage? It's amazing!

It better be. I almost died filming it.
Mutant War?!
This is your ticket! You're going viral for sure! You'll break the internet!!!
But calling out the cops like that?
You're gonna get yourself disappeared!
Where are the police during this?
Are the cult and the government colluding?
Is this real or urban legend?
No way! Nowadays, conspiracy theories are just another type of entertainment. Besides...
...if they did, they'd be admitting I was right!
Are you serious? You're willing to risk your life on that?
But still... I better have something to back this up...

"Ah... Maystorm, is it?
"You think yourself a protector, that you can defend the Children of the Atom?
"Your kindness makes you weak...."
You're no match for Hisako. She's not simple, like you.
She belongs by my side.
Don't stand in my way.

Why do you care so much about Hisako?
She is my soulmate.
And what is she to you? What are you to her?
Nothing.
So why do you care?
Because she is my friend!!!

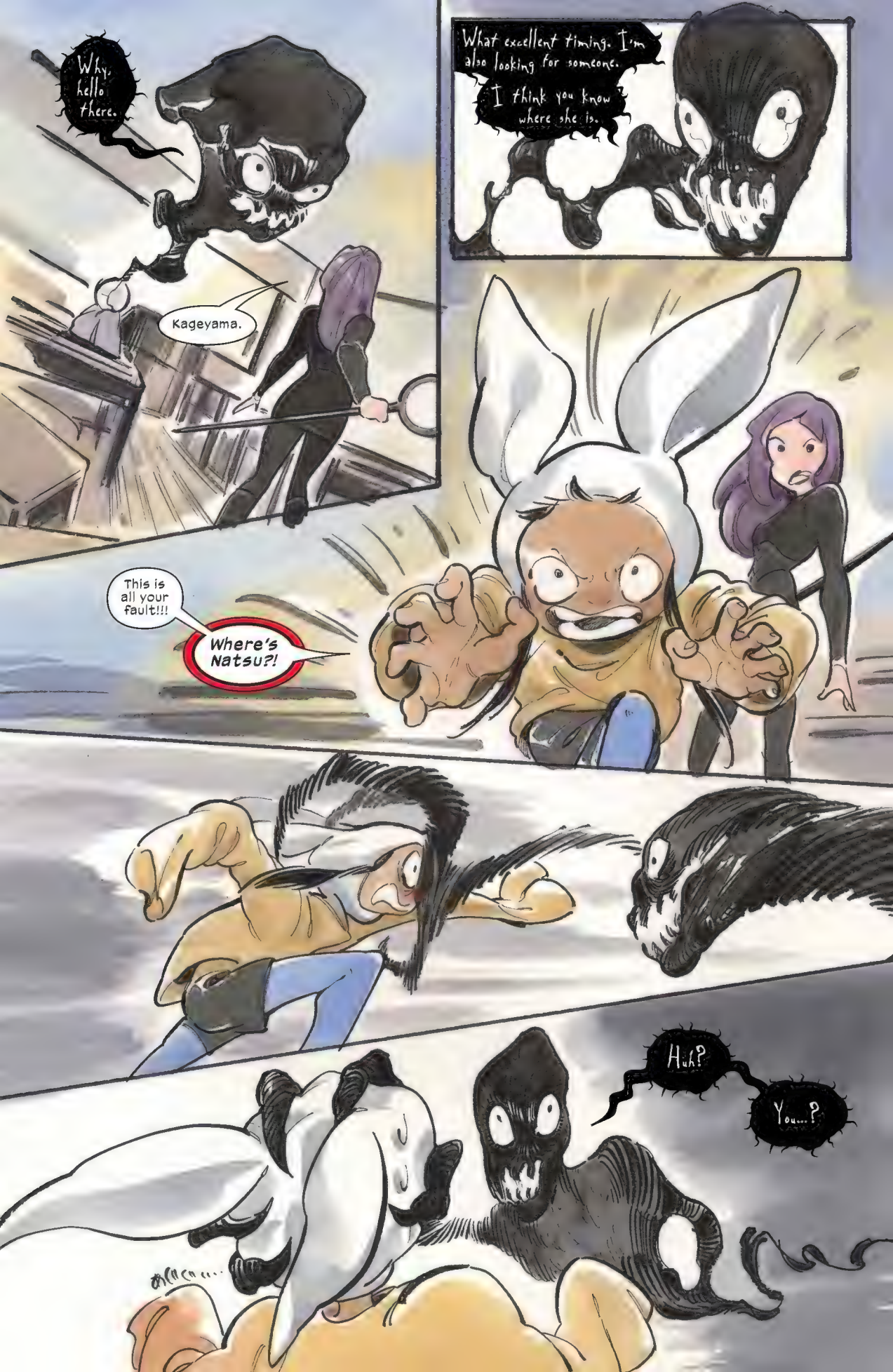

My friend...
Huh. There's that house with the weird boy with the cat... the one who scratched me.
Kageyama said I was...
...his neighbor?
!?
Um... hello?
Can I help you?
Umm... I'm... uhh...
Oh! You must be a friend of Shinobu's!
Yeah... that's me.
Is... uh...Shinobu home?
I'm so sorry! He just stepped out!
He should be back soon. It's so cold out--why don't you come wait inside?
1992
Uh, sure. Thanks.

What the...?!

Hi-chan?
I knew you were no friend of Shinobu.
You're with that Hisako girl, aren't you?!
Since she showed up, my Shinobu's changed!
All of this... obsession... it's because of her!!!
Just when he was finally becoming a good boy...
You're crazy...

IRODORI HIGH SCHOOL.
You two still here?
Yes, ma'am! Nico is helping me study for the exam!
That's what I like to hear! Just don't stay too late.
We won't!!!
...Let's begin, shall we, Mori?
I hope this works...
I brought this book from Natsu's room. Perhaps it has something to show us.
!!
Hey! I see Natsu's eyepatch!!!

That's good. It's telling me she's alive...
Eh? The symbol of the Atom?
Is that where Natsu is?
Something's not right.
No! Natsu's book is shredded!

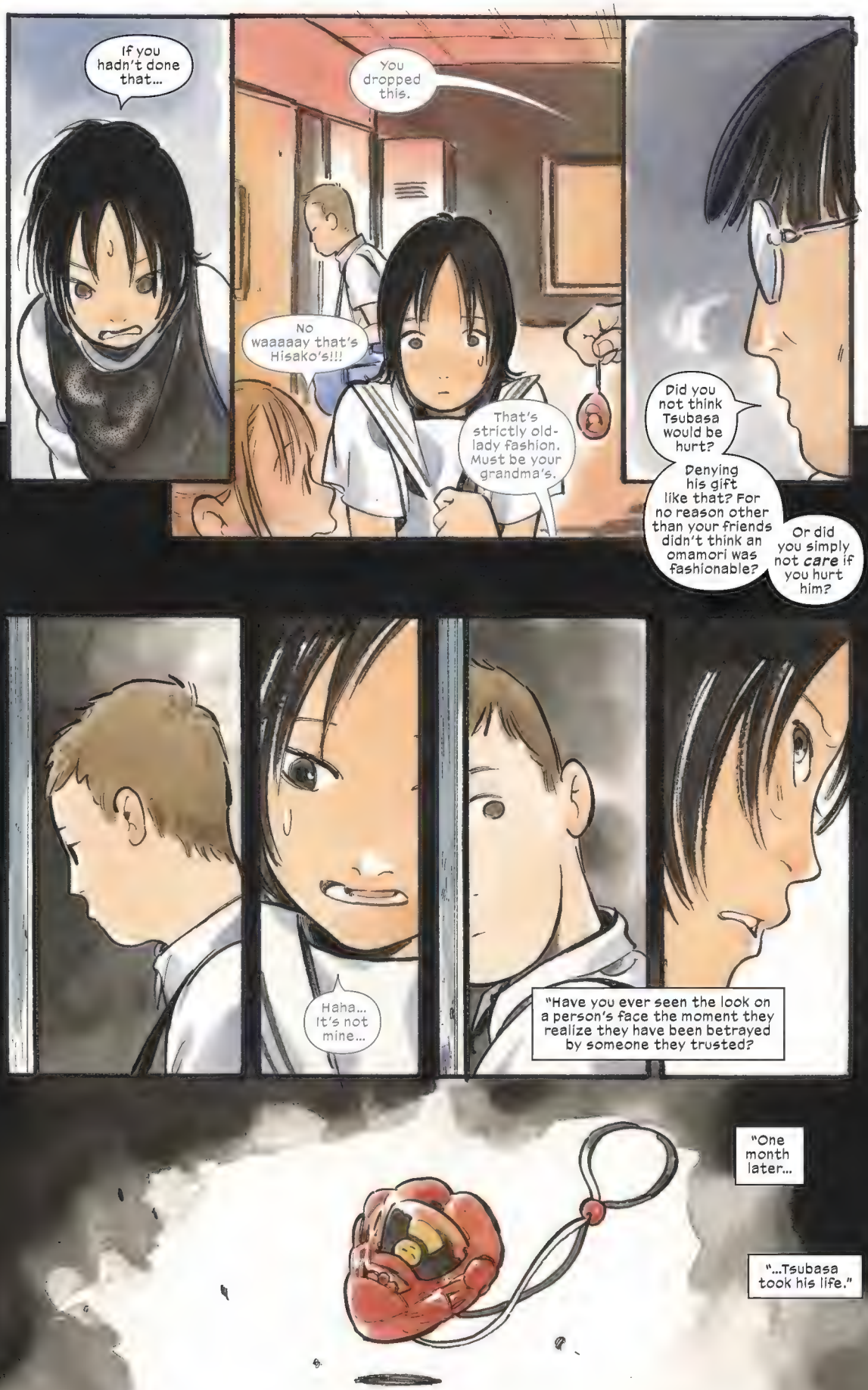

Why, hello there.
What excellent timing. I'm also looking for someone.
I think you know where she is.
Kageyama.
This is all your fault!!!
Where's Natsu?!
Huh?
You...?

Stand down, Mori!!
If you'll excuse me...
Nico!!!

Are you okay?!
Uuurnnnh...
Ahh...
Hisako is in danger!
C'mon, back to my place!
Whaa--?!
"I just hope my spell can seal his power long enough."

...Maybe I should've gone to school with Nico and Mori.
Mom: Are you taking care of yourself? Going to school?
Mom: Do what you have to do, but send me a message sometime, okay?
DING DONG
Who?
CLICK
Hisako. I've found you at last.
You dropped this.
What?

Kageyama...?
You... Kageyama... Shinobu?
The same class... in middle school...
You transferred in...
Do you finally remember?
You always forget. That's why I decided to toy with you.
I didn't count on Tsubasa protecting you. That needed to be dealt with.
It took longer than I wanted.


If you hadn't done that...
You dropped this.
No waaaaay that's Hisako's!!!
That's strictly old-lady fashion. Must be your grandma's.
Did you not think Tsubasa would be hurt?
Denying his gift like that? For no reason other than your friends didn't think an omamori was fashionable?
Or did you simply not *care* if you hurt him?
Haha... It's not mine...
"Have you ever seen the look on a person's face the moment they realize they have been betrayed by someone they trusted?
"One month later...
"...Tsubasa took his life."

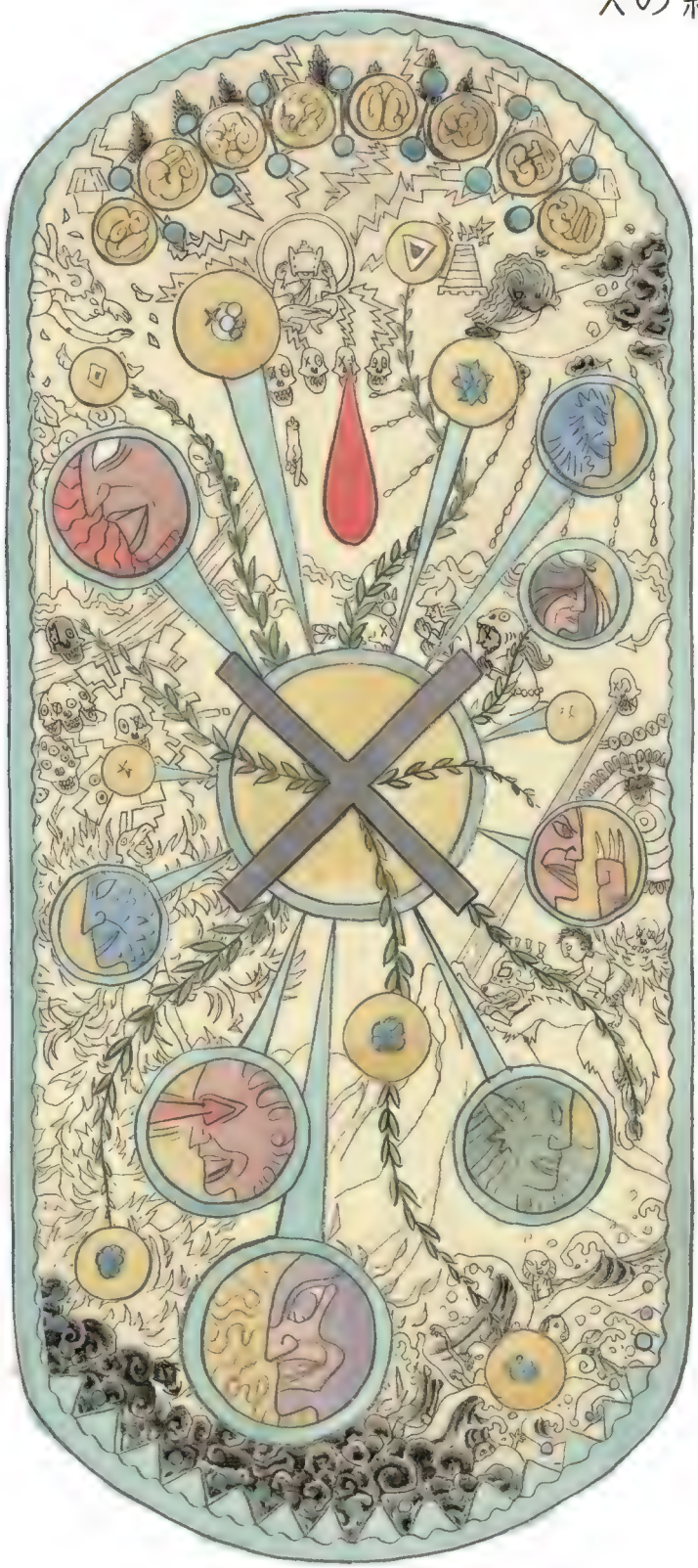
Hisako, cease fighting yourself, your trauma.
That is not who you are.
You and I together, we can remake the world the way it should be.
Wh-what are you talking about?!
Uu...!!

Urrrrk...
Did Tsubasa... really kill himself?
He came to me for advice after you shunned him. You meant so much to him, and you hurt him so deeply.
He was tormented and didn't know what to do. So I helped him. Just a tiny mental suggestion.
Still...he was the one who did the deed. So, yes, I would say he killed himself.
Enough of playing the tragic hero.
That's not the Hisako I want. The one who is fit to stand by my side.
Show me your shadow.

You feel it growing, don't you? The darkness inside?
Don't fight it. Embrace it.

There she is at last...
...my Hisako.
Tsubasa, forgive me...
It was all my fault.
We are the same.
Understood by none. Feared by all.
Yet protected by someone... by our power.
Welcome to our new world. Our new age begins now.
To be continued...

THE TESTAMENT OF X
Xの絵文書



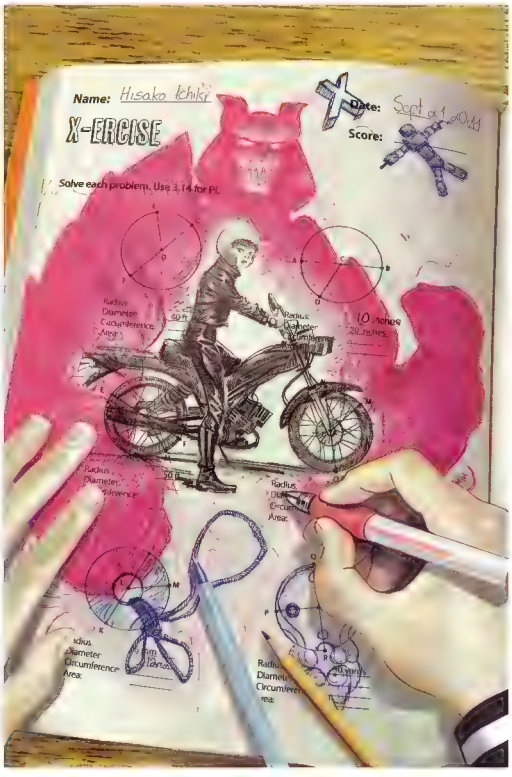
#8 DESIGN VARIANT BY **PEACH MOMOKO**

#9 DESIGN VARIANT BY **PEACH MOMOKO**

#10 DESIGN VARIANT BY **PEACH MOMOKO**

#7 VARIANT BY **DIKE RUAN** & **MATTHEW WILSON**

#7 VARIANT BY **MIKE DEL MUNDO**



#7 VARIANT BY **PEACH MOMOKO**

ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN #9, ULTIMATE X-MEN #7, ULTIMATES #4 & *ULTIMATE BLACK PANTHER #8*
CONNECTING VARIANTS BY
WES CRAIG & **JASON WORDIE**

#8 VARIANT BY **IAN BERTRAM**

#8 CONNECTING VARIANT BY **JOSEMARIA CASANOVAS**

#8 VARIANT BY **TAURIN CLARKE**

#9 VARIANT BY **DERRICK CHEW**

#9 VARIANT BY **RIAN GONZALES**

#10 VARIANT BY **MATEUS MANHANINI**

#11 VARIANT BY
CARMEN CARNERO & **NOLAN WOODARD**

#11 VARIANT BY **PEACH MOMOKO**

#12 VARIANT BY **JIM MAHFOOD**

#12 VARIANT BY **PEACH MOMOKO**

#12 VARIANT BY
SALVADOR LARROCA & **EDGAR DELGADO**

MARVEL ULTIMATE

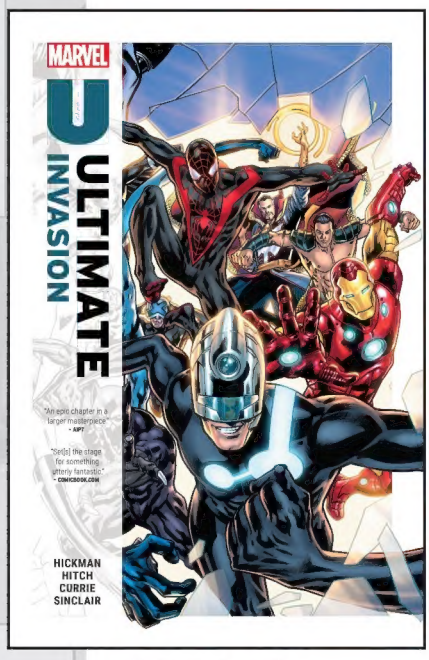
COLLECTED EDITIONS

Ultimate X-Men by Peach Momoko Vol. 1: Fears and Hates
ISBN 978-1-302-95731-5

AVAILABLE IN PRINT OR DIGITAL WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD!

MARVEL ULTIMATE

COLLECTED EDITIONS



Ultimate Invasion
ISBN 978-0-7851-9473-6

Ultimate Spider-Man by Jonathan Hickman Vol. 1: Married With Children
ISBN 978-1-302-95729-2

Ultimate Black Panther by Bryan Hill Vol. 1: Peace and War
ISBN 978-1-302-95730-8

Ultimates by Deniz Camp Vol. 1: Fix the World
ISBN 978-1-302-95751-3

AVAILABLE IN PRINT OR DIGITAL WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD!

"All told, you won't want to put this down as the world-building grabs you."
- AIPT

"Peach Momoko does so much good character work by understanding when the dialogue or artwork should carry different moments."
- COMIC BOOK REVOLUTION

MEET THE MUTANTS' NEW MENTOR, PSYLOCKE!

After recent climactic events and the surprise new teammate they found, Mei, Hisako, Nico and the mutants need some guidance! Fortunately, the mysterious Kanon is an older student with a surprising amount of expertise! But bigger questions remain: What exactly are mutants? Where do they come from? And how has the Maker's Council been keeping them under control? All these secrets start to unravel as our heroes investigate a murder that, for some reason, the authorities keep covering up! Meanwhile, Shadow King advances his sinister plots! Maystorm and Surge are on a collision course! Viper enters the stage after a mass raid on the cult known as the **CHILDREN OF THE ATOM**! And a seismic confrontation is coming!

COLLECTING **ULTIMATE X-MEN (2024) #7-12** — BY PEACH MOMOKO.

T+ MARVEL